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ATTITUDES TOWARD ABORTION:
A STUDY OF PUBLIC OPINION IN 1972 AND 1973

by

© RHONDA W. COCKERILL

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Attitudes toward Abortion: A Study of Public Opinion in 1972 and 1973" submitted by Rhonda W. Cockerill in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date Oct 8 1974

ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis was to examine the variation in the attitudes of the American white adult population toward the legalization of abortion. The data used in the study were drawn from the National Opinion Research Center's 1972 and 1973 general social surveys.

Two theoretical frameworks, drawn from recent fertility literature, were considered in explaining the results. The first was the normative approach and the second was the economic or utilitarian approach. The Namboodiri-Pope framework was used to "integrate" these two approaches. This framework suggests that normative considerations will be the major factor determining attitudes toward abortion until that point in time when the norms begin to lose their constraining power. As this happens, the abortion decision will become increasingly subject to utilitarian considerations. Analysis was begun by making predictions and accounting for results using the normative framework. Provision was made, though, for turning to the economic framework if the normative approach was not adequately handling

the data.

By and large, predictions made on the basis of the normative framework were borne out. Those subgroups with the greatest exposure to the traditional norms (measured by four major indicators: various demographic variables, religion and religious commitment, family and marriage variables and sexuality variables) were most opposed to legalizing abortion. On the other hand, those groups with less exposure, or whose experiences could have reduced the strength of the traditional norms, were least opposed to the legalization of abortion.

Our results seemed to indicate that American society is still at a stage where normative rather than economic considerations influence individual attitudes toward abortion. A review of the history of American abortion attitudes, however, shows that the idea of legalized abortion has won considerable acceptance very quickly. We would predict that although at present normative considerations seem best able to account for variations in American attitudes toward abortion, the traditional ethical code will be modified and the economic framework will become more applicable to decisions concerning whether or not to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND THEORY

1.1 The Problem

The objective of this thesis is to examine the variation in the attitudes[1] of the American white adult population toward the legalization of abortion. The data used in this study are drawn from the National Opinion Research Center's (NORC) 1972 and 1973 general social surveys. In both surveys, respondents were presented with six conditions and, for each condition, asked whether or not they would be for the legalization of abortion. These conditions are:

1. abortion when the woman's health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy,
2. abortion when there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby,
3. abortion when the woman became pregnant as a result of rape,
4. abortion when the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children,

5. abortion when the woman is not married and does not want to marry the man, and
6. abortion when the woman is married and does not want any more children.

The main problem of the thesis is to account for the respondent's stand on abortion for each of these conditions in terms of his social and demographic characteristics. In addition to this cross-sectional analysis, however, a trend analysis of the changes in attitudes toward abortion over the past ten years will be presented. This analysis is possible because the questions on abortion used in the 1972 and 1973 NORC general surveys have been asked in previous studies of United States national samples (1965 NORC survey, Rossi (1966, 1967) reporting results; 1965 National Fertility Study, Westoff, Moore and Ryder (1969), and Blake (1971) reporting results; various Gallup polls[2] taken between 1962 and 1969, Blake (1971) reporting results). The trend analysis will supplement the cross-sectional analysis by indicating which segments of the population have changed markedly in their attitudes toward abortion and which groups have not.

1.2 Rationale

In recent years interest in abortion has increased. Once a subject of indifference or denial, it has recently received more than its share of discussion and debate. Interest from both professional and lay circles in the legal, moral and political aspects of abortion have made it a topic of some of the liveliest of current debates.

This increase in interest in abortion is associated with an increase in the liberalization of the corresponding laws and attitudes. In a momentous 1973 decision (Roe vs Wade, 93 S. Ct. 705 (1973)), the United States Supreme Court ruled that no State had the right to prohibit any woman from obtaining a legal abortion in the first six months of pregnancy. Attitudes toward abortion have also shown a liberalizing change. Blake (1971) found that during the 1960 - 1970 decade there was "rapidly growing" support for abortion. Our 1972 data show that this support has continued to grow (see Table 1.1).

All these changes point to the fact that abortion is an area of rapidly changing attitudes and legal standing. Our purpose will be to investigate the area. What with the introduction of near-perfect

Table 1.1 Attitudes of the American general population toward abortion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1965 and 1972 NORC surveys.

	1965	1972
Conditions		
1. If the woman's own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy (Mother's health)	71	87
2. If there is a strong chance of serious defect in the fetus (Defect in fetus)	55	78
3. If she became pregnant as a result of rape (Rape)	56	79
4. If the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children (Economic problems)	21	49
5. If she is not married and does not want to marry the man (Unmarried)	18	43
6. If she is married and does not want any more children (Family control)	15	40
N	1482	1348

contraceptive techniques, the rise of zero-population growth movements, and the emergence of woman's liberation movements, this decade has been marked by rapidly changing attitudes to any subject directly or indirectly related to fertility. Abortion has emerged from taboo status to widespread concern and public debate and our study, by concentrating on this current topic, will be able to contribute relevant information on where Americans stand on the question of abortion today and the direction in which they seem to be moving.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

A problem with the previous cross-sectional literature is its lack of a theoretical framework. Series of variables were cross-tabulated with attitudes toward abortion, but little attempt was made to account for the "why" of the findings. In this study, we will attempt to go one step further than just presenting the statistical rates. Our aim will be to bring together a relatively loose theoretical framework within which some of the findings can be explained. We feel that at this stage a well-developed theory with hypotheses clearly laid out may be premature. We will, however, make some attempt at accounting for our findings in terms of a theory.

Two broad approaches to the explanatory analysis of human fertility can be found in recent literature[3] - the "economic or utilitarian" approach and the "normative" approach. These two approaches were developed to account for "why people have the number of children they do", but many of the ideas and suggestions they use can be applied to attitudes toward abortion. We will be using these two frameworks to account for our findings, thus our first step will be to outline each approach.

The Normative Approach

The normative approach to attitudes toward abortion accounts for the different views of different groups in terms of either differing norms or differing commitments to similar norms. Blake (1971) and Rossi (1967) use the normative approach to account for their findings. The traditional social and religious norms surrounding motherhood and reproduction are used to account for the American population's views on legalizing abortion. Where the reasons for the legitimation of abortion run counter to the prevailing social and religious norms, there will be strong disapproval of the practice. Where the reasons are accepted as legitimate under the traditional norms, there will be approval of the practice.

Within the broad categories of acceptance of some reasons for abortion and rejection of others, there will be varying degrees of acceptance and rejection by different categories of people depending upon their exposure and commitment to the traditional norms. Those groups with the greatest exposure to the traditional family and religious values will be most opposed to legalizing abortion. Those that have relatively little investment in the traditional social and religious norms, or whose experiences have tended to reduce the strength of these norms, will be least opposed.

An example may make this line of theoretical reasoning clearer. Blake (1971) found that women were more opposed to legalizing abortion than were men and the lower classes (which she measures by education) of both sexes were more opposed to the enhanced availability of abortion. She labels the attitude of the upper-class male as "deviant" and says that the remainder of the population hold views in line with existing traditional and legal norms of sexual behavior and pronatalist constraints. These norms may appear incompatible with the economic and status interests of the individuals they affect but they are in line with many of the noneconomic goals and interests of most of the population - in particular, a commitment to family roles and rewards.

> "Since the majority of women and less advantaged persons derive most of their lifetime rewards from the family complex, and from the norms upholding it, and at the same time experience little that deeply challenges this institutional arrangement, they tend to support it unconditionally. In particular, they appear loathe to admit the legitimacy of laws which would allow individuals the right to 'turn off' such a hal-

> lowed institution as the family through the simple mechanism of an abortion."
>
> (Judith Blake, 1971, p. 545)

The Utilitarian Approach

The utilitarian approach to attitudes toward abortion accounts for the different views of different groups in terms of a desire to maximize differing utilities or sets of utilities. According to this approach, people strive to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs. They will hold favorable attitudes to those things associated with the satisfaction of their needs and unfavorable attitudes toward those objects which thwart or punish them.

Hawthorn (1970) develops a utility model and applies it to Rainwater's book, Family Design (1965). Although Hawthorn uses his model to explain differences in ideal family size, his reasoning also applies to the study of attitudes toward abortion. Rainwater reported that the most common factor determining family size was that "one should not have more children than one can support, but one should have as many as one can afford" (Rainwater, 1965, pp. 281-282). Rainwater qualified this by adding "affording a given size of family is . . . only superficially conceptualized as an economic matter" (p. 282). In Hawthorn's utilitarian terms (1970, p. 64):

> "The utilities desired by these couples were a maintained standard of living ('as many as one can afford'), psychic stability for themselves, a meaningful extradomestic role for the wife (for some), psychic satisfactions for the children, and a feeling of being morally responsible and not selfish."

With regard to attitudes toward abortion, if economic considerations of utility applied, then the values involved in determining whether an individual was for or against abortion would fall into a hierarchy of preferences. If the highest preference was satisfied by an opposition to legalized abortion, then the individual would be against abortion on demand. Conversely, if the highest preference was better satisfied by being able to obtain abortions fairly easily, the individual would hold a more liberal attitude toward abortion. For example, an economic explanation could be used to explain why, among married women of middle-class or higher status, those who work are more liberal towards legalizing abortion than those who do not work. If we can assume that these women are working because they want to, then we can explain their more liberal attitude toward abortion by the greater value they must place on a meaningful extra-domestic role for themselves.

These two approaches for explaining attitudes toward abortion were taken from recent fertility literature. This literature, however, is quite unclear under what conditions each approach should be applied. Some authors stress normative factors, while others contend that it is economic considerations that influence family size decisions. Namboodiri and Pope, in a paper presented to the 1968 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, suggest a method of bring the two frameworks together. Their idea is that, at one time in the past, it was solely normative considerations which influenced family size decisions and that, at one time in the future, the normative factors will be unimportant because the decision concerning how many children to have will be made only on the basis of economic factors. At the present time though, the two frameworks are working simultaneously in influencing family size decisions.

> "It seems to us that it is operationally convenient and methodologically, as well as conceptually, meaningful to define the normative constraints on an act as the complement of the degree to which the choice of that act is subject to utility considerations. ..., we might say that to the extent that family size is kept outside the utility framework of individuals in a population, social norms concerning family size exist in that

> population. On the other hand, if family size is completely subject to utility considerations, the empirical regularity in family size is to be explained by similarity in the utility considerations of the disparate individuals involved rather than to a strong social norm prescribing what family size should be."
>
> (Namboodiri and Pope, 1968, p. 5)

What Namboodiri and Pope are suggesting is that normative considerations will be the major factor determining family size decisions until that point in time when the norms begin to lose their constraining power. As this happens, the family size decision will become more and more subject to utilitarian considerations. This way of viewing the normative and economic approaches seems to us a valuable way of sensibly organizing our discussion of attitudes toward abortion. If we view attitudes toward abortion as a decision similar to the family-size decision, we can say that economic considerations of utility will apply to decisions affecting whether one is for or against legalizing abortion only when moral norms are not supervening.

Namboodiri and Pope argue that the family size decision is presently at a stage where both economic and normative factors are important. Namboodiri (1973a, 1973b) is developing a model of fertility that integrates the two frameworks. We feel that the decision concerning abortion is still at a stage where normative constraints are predominant. This hypothesis is made on two grounds. First, previous authors (Blake, 1971, 1973; Rossi, 1966, 1967) have been, and are, using the normative framework to account for attitudes toward abortion. Second, the articles for and against legalizing abortion that one reads in newspapers and magazines tend to invoke normative considerations in their arguments. In any event, by using Namboodiri and Pope's framework we can begin analysis by making predictions, and accounting for results, using the normative framework. If we find that this approach is not adequately explaining the data, we can turn to the utilitarian approach.

1.4 Methodology

The data used in this thesis are from the 1972 and 1973 National Opinion Research Center's national surveys. The universe sampled by NORC is the total noninstitutionalized population of the continental United States, 18 years of age and older. We considered white respondents only because there was not a sufficient number of non-white respondents for adequate analysis. Of white respondents, there were 1348 completed interviews in 1972 and 1304 in 1973. Each survey asked its respondents their views on legalizing abortion for the six circumstances outlined above and, in addition, asked for information on the various sociological and demographic characteristics that previous studies have shown to be related to attitudes toward abortion.

Our data analysis initially considered the six reasons for abortion separately. It proceeded through means of simultaneous controls. The basic question - Given a relationship between two variables, what can be learned by introducing a third variable or a series of third variables into the analysis - was answered in order to determine why people hold the attitudes toward abortion that they do.

We decided on a secondary analysis of already existing data for a number of reasons. One important factor is the nature and quality of data collected by any small group of individuals as versus the nature and quality of data collected by a reputable agency. The time, money and know-how to collect, from a national sample of Americans, the amount of information required for any in-depth study of attitudes virtually requires an individual to turn to research centers. Another advantage of secondary analysis is that it allows one to do studies over time. In Herbert Hyman's words

(1972, p. 14):

> "If one is to accumulate general knowledge of the ways in which individuals and societies change over time - to build an adequate theory of the patterns individuals and groups exhibit as they age and live through chains of experiences impinging upon them in diverse sequences and at different junctures in their growth - one must be able to bring long spans of time under study."

An integral part of this study is to see how past attitudes are related to present attitudes toward abortion and the only way we felt this could be accomplished was by the use of secondary data.

Footnotes

1. "Attitude" is a concept central to our study and, as such, should be addressed. Numerous books and articles have been written on the theoretical and empirical issues of attitudes, but the only thing on which most investigators will agree is "there exists no commonly accepted definition" (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1972, p. 488). In writing this thesis, we have deliberately refrained from jumping into the debate on attitudes as we felt little would be gained by adding our views. For the purposes of this paper, we shall use Thurstone's definition (1946, p. 39):

   > "I defined attitude as the intensity of positive or negative affect for or against a psychological object. A psychological object is any symbol, person, phrase, slogan, or idea toward which people differ as regards positive or negative affect."

   No stand will be taken on the question of whether or not individuals' attitudes toward abortion correspond to their actual actions concerning abortion. Our aim is to examine the positive and negative feeling directed towards legalizing abortion, not to determine who would and who would not have an abortion. As more data become available on the incidence of abortion, this step could be taken.

2. The Gallup polls for which information on attitudes toward abortion are available are: the August 1962 poll, the December 1965 poll, the May 1968 poll, the December 1968 poll, and the October 1969 poll.

3. These two approaches to human fertility were initially suggested by M. Brewster Smith's (1973) review of Namboodiri and Pope's (1968) paper. In their paper, Namboodiri and Pope attempt to delineate under what conditions each framework is applicable to the explanatory analysis of fertility.

We should point out that each approach has been used by itself to explain fertility. For brief discussions of the economic approach to the explanatory analysis of fertility see: Gary S. Becker (1960, pp. 209-231), Richard A. Easterlin (1967), Deborah S. Freeman (1963, pp. 414-426), Ronald Freedman and L. Coombs (1966, pp. 197-222), and Ronald Freedman and Doris Slesinger (1961, pp. 161-173). For brief discussions of the normative approach to the explanatory analysis of fertility see: Ronald Freedman, G. Baumert, and M. Bolte (1959, pp. 136-150), Ronald Freedman (1963, pp. 220-245), Charles Westoff and Raymond H. Potvin (1967), and Joseph J. Spengler (1966, pp. 109-130).

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY: SAMPLE, OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES, and TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS

2.1 Source of Data

This study is based on a secondary analysis of data collected by the National Data Program for the Social Sciences, an annual social survey designed by the National Opinion Research Center and under the overall direction of James A. Davis.

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) is a nonprofit social research center affiliated with the University of Chicago. Its objectives are the replication of questions which have appeared in previous national surveys and the prompt distribution of interesting and high quality data to a variety of users who are not affiliated with large research centers.

The entire research project is monitored by the American Sociological Association through a committee chaired by Dr. Hubert Blalock of the University of Washington. For the items in the initial 1972 survey, 150 sociologists and social scientists reviewed drafts of the questionnaire, suggesting revisions and additions, and settled on the exact wording of questions by vote. The 1973 version was revised and expanded (from fourty to sixty minutes) by a group of advisors including Hubert Blalock, Otis D. Duncan, Norval Glenn, Otto Larsen, Philip Hastings, Herbert Hyman, James Short and Stephen B. Withey.

NORC data are available for use by anyone. You do not require their permission before publishing analyses of their data; their only stipulation is that NORC is cited as the source of the data.

2.2 Data Collection Procedures

The data used in this thesis are from the 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys. The 1972 survey was conducted during the months of February, March and April; the 1973 survey was conducted during March and April. The NORC sample[1] is a standard multistage area probability sample to the block or segment level. At the block level, quota sampling is used.

In 1972, the primary sampling units (PSU's) employed were derived from NORC's 1953 Master Sample. The primary sampling units in the 1953 Master Sample had been selected with probabilities proportionate to their estimated 1953 populations. Because of population shifts in the past two decades, this set of PSU's was outdated. NORC decided to retain this sample but update it because it had been initially selected by a well-trained and experienced field force. The procedure used to update the sample is described by Nathan Keyfitz (1951). It involved comparing the desired 1960[2] probabilities of selection for PSU's with their original 1950 probabilities. If the originally selected PSU had a lower original probability than was warranted by its 1960 population, it was retained in the 1972 sample and assigned the desired probability. If it had a higher probability than was now warranted, it was considered for elimination. The probability of retention for such a PSU was the ratio of its desired probability to its original probability. Replacements for the eliminated PSU's were drawn from those PSU's which had not fallen into the 1953 sample and for which the 1953 probability was lower than that desired in 1960.

The advantage of this method is that it preserves the stratification based on the 1950 classifications of geographic regions, size of largest town, median family income, economic characteristics and, in the

South, race. The only restratification was of counties which the Census Bureau classified as nonmetropolitan in 1950 but as metropolitan in 1960 - they were shifted to the metropolitan strata. This restratification complicated the computation of selection probabilities but it increased the efficiency of the sample.

The discussion of the selection of the primary sampling units in 1973 was rather sketchy. The 1973 codebook says that the PSU's employed were Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas or non-metropolitan counties selected in NORC's Master Sample. These statistical areas and counties had been stratified by region, age and race before being selected. Whether these PSU's were the PSU's employed in 1972 or new ones based on the 1970 Census, could not be determined.

The units of selection of the second stage of gathering the sample were localities in 1972 and block groups and enumeration districts in 1973. The localities used in 1972 were ordered according to the following categories: cities with block statistics, other urban places, urbanized Minor Civil Divisions, and non-urbanized Minor Civil Divisions. Localities were selected from this list by systematic sampling. That is, an initial locality was selected randomly and then a previously designated skip interval was used to draw the rest of the sample. This method provided stratification according to size and urban type of locality and, also, provided selection with probability proportionate to size. The block groups and enumeration districts used in 1973 were stratified according to race and income before selection. Information on how the selection was made in 1973 was not given in the codebook.

The third stage of selection in both 1972 and 1973 was that of blocks. In places for which the 1960 Census block statistics were available, blocks were selected with probabilities proportionate to the population in the block. In 1972, for places without block statistics, Census enumeration districts were selected with probabilities proportional to the number of households. These selected districts were divided into segments and estimates of the number of households within each segment were obtained by field counting. The selection of segments was then made with the probability proportionate to the number of households. For places with block statistics in 1973, measures of the size of the blocks were obtained by field counting.

The average cluster size in 1972 was 7.0 respondents. These cluster sizes were, however, recalculated to better reflect the 1970 population shift from the East to the West Coast, and from rural to urban areas.

This adjustment resulted in a range of cluster sizes from 6.56 in the rural West to 9.48 in the urban East. The average cluster size in 1973 was 5.0 respondents per cluster. No mention was made of whether this cluster size had been recalculated.

At the block or segment level, selection of respondents was by quota sampling. The quotas called for approximately equal numbers of men and women with the exact proportion in each segment determined by 1970 Census tract data. In addition, quotas were set to bring the distribution of specific variables in line with the known distributions in the population. In 1972, the age distribution was brought into line with the distribution in the population. In 1973, the additional requirement for women was that there was the proper proportion of employed and unemployed women in the location. For men, the added requirement was that there was the proper proportion of men over and under 35. Again, these quotas were based on the 1970 Census tract data. It should be noted that this method of selecting respondents - i.e. setting up quotas so the distribution of a given variable in the sample is the same as the distribution in the population - enables us to proceed without weighting the sample.

The method of using quota sampling at the last stage of sample selection is unique to NORC. They chose to conclude with quota sampling, although they were aware of the chance of sample biases due to not-at-homes, because of its substantially reduced cost. To reduce the bias introduced by the quota sampling, interviewers were instructed to canvass and interview only in the late afternoon on weekdays or during the weekend and holidays.

The disadvantage of a quota sample is that the mean squared error cannot be estimated directly. One can, however, estimate sampling variability using procedures such as those outlined by Stephan and McCarthy (1958). NORC suggests, from its past experience, that its samples of 1500 can be considered as having the same efficiency as a simple random sample of 1000 cases. In making this statement, they were concerned with the "average" effect upon a large set of different variables by the use of quotas at the last stage of selection.

2.3 Operationalization of Variables

In the initial chapter of our thesis, we outlined the two theoretical frameworks that we were using to account for our findings. These were the utilitarian (or economic) approach and the normative approach. The former suggested that attitudes toward abortion are arrived at through a consideration of relative preferences for children (as compared to other consumer goods), direct and indirect (opportunity) costs of children, and the couple's level of living. The second approach held that empirical regularities in attitudes toward abortion can be explained by social and religious norms prescribing the pattern of family growth.

These two approaches for explaining attitudes toward abortion were "borrowed" from recent fertility literature. This literature, however, was quite unclear under what conditions each approach should be applied. To overcome this problem, we decided to use Namboodiri and Pope's method of integration. Their suggestion was that, at one time in the past, fertility decisions were determined solely by normative considerations and that, at one time in the future, fertility decisions would be determined entirely by economic considerations. At present, though, they suggest that an individual's decision to have or not to have a(nother) child is determined by a mixture of the two frameworks. More specifically, to the extent that economic considerations of utility apply, the values and factors involved in decisions affecting family size fall into a hierarchy of preferences but, to the extent that moral norms are operative, choices are made without consideration of utilities[3].

This method of joining the normative and economic approaches seemed to us a valuable way of sensibly organizing our discussion of attitudes toward abortion. Because we felt that, at least presently, normative considerations were predominant in decisions concerning abortion, we began analysis using the normative framework. However, we felt that if this approach was not adequately explaining the data, we could turn to the utilitarian approach. This procedure enabled us to look at both frameworks while still retaining some simplicity in hypothesis formation. In our opinion, this formulation may be an oversimplified way of looking at the phenomena of attitudes toward abortion, but it does serve as a useful first step in designing our empirical investigation.

Using the normative framework, we shall be trying to account for the different views of different subgroups in the population by their varying degrees of exposure and commitment to the traditional social and religious norms. Those groups with the greatest exposure should be most opposed to legalizing abortion and those with the least exposure, or whose experiences have reduced the strength of the traditional norms, will be least opposed. We shall be using four major indicators of the traditional norms and values:

1. Various demographic variables such as age, sex, size of place of residence (urban/rural) and education. Because of the discrete nature and number of these variables, we have left the discussion of their operationalization to Chapter 4, where they are considered in connection with attitudes toward abortion.

2. Religion and religious commitment. One of the sets of norms that the normative theory refers to is the set of traditional religious norms. Within American society, there is a considerable range of religious beliefs corresponding to the range of possible religious affiliations. Each of these religions has its own beliefs about human life and, because of the diversity of religious affiliations, there is a diversity of beliefs about birth control and abortion (Lundburg, et al., 1968, pp. 218-219). We predict that an individual's personal views on abortion will correspond to his religious affiliation's views. For example, Catholics would be expected to be less liberal toward abortion than other religious groups because of the vigorous stand against birth control that the Catholic Church has taken (reinforced by Pope Paul VI's July 29, 1968 encyclical on the birth control controversy).

In addition to religious affiliation, there is the element of religious commitment. The fact of belonging to a certain religion becomes important only when one is attending, and thus being exposed, to the traditional religious norms. For example, since the traditional religious norms of the Catholic Church are opposed to any legalization of abortion, we would predict that, among Catholics, religious commitment would be negatively related to a pro-abortion stand. We used as our measure of religious commitment, frequency of church attendance. Support for our contention that religious affiliation only becomes important when one is attending that religion's church services is provided by the Population Council's 1968 study. They found that among the less frequent church attenders, the percent of married Catholic women who used an unapproved method of contraception was 74 percent, while among the weekly church attenders it was 44 percent (Population Council, 1968, pp. 10-11). These variables are considered in connection with attitudes toward abortion in Chapter 5.

3. Family variables. The second set of norms that the normative theory refers to is the values and norms surrounding the family. Marriage and parenthood are institutions that are normatively required of virtually everyone (Reiss, 1971, pp. 192-194; Levy, 1972, p. 23).

Furthermore, it is only within marriage that parenthood is legitimate (Reiss, 1971, p. 23).

Our reasoning is that those adults who are married and have, or are going to have, children are more committed (and exposed) to the traditional marriage and family norms than those adults who are not married and who are not going to have children. Various indicators of these family norms - i.e. marital status, preferred family size - were used to measure commitment to the traditional norms. The complete discussion of the operationalization of these variables can be found in Chapter 6, where they are considered in connection with attitudes toward abortion.

4. Sexuality variables. The final set of norms that the normative theory refers to are the values and norms surrounding sex. The nature of man is such that the sex drive can be linked to almost any object or situation. However, the sex drive is shaped, channeled and restricted by society so that only certain individuals become seen as possible sex partners (Goode, 1964, p. 13).

In society today, there are norms against sex relations between adults of the same sex (see, for example, Reiss, 1971, p. 370) and sex relations between individuals who are not married or between individuals who are married but not to one another (see, for example, Goode, 1964, pp. 20-26). We used attitudes on these issues (that is, attitudes toward homosexuality, premarital and extramarital sex) to measure commitment to the traditional sexuality norms. The discussion of the relationship between these variables and attitudes toward abortion can be found in Chapter 7.

2.4 Statistical Methods

The method of analysis that will be employed in this thesis is crosstabulation. A crosstabulation is basically a joint frequency distribution of cases according to two or more variables. Its central aim is to answer the question: "Given a relationship between two variables, what can be learned by introducing a third variable into the analysis?". This analytic process, whereby the relationship between two variables is examined by introducing a third variable, is called elaboration. In more technical terminology, one begins with a relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable and then seeks to explain this relationship by introducing an explanatory variable, called a test factor. The method used is to "stratify" or "hold constant" the test factor and then examine the contingent associations. Stratification or holding constant means that the test factor has been broken down into its component categories, and the relationship between the initial two variables can be seen without the influence of this third factor. In our thesis, the dependent variable is attitudes toward abortion and the independent and control variables are such things as age, sex, education and attitudes toward premarital sex.

The purpose of elaboration is to "explain" or "specify" a relationship, thus making it more meaningful and more exact. Before beginning elaboration, though, it must be determined whether the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is symmetrical, reciprocal or asymmetrical. This is because it is only possible to continue with meaningful crosstabulation if the relationship is asymmetrical. Our relationships seem to be asymmetrical. Clearly, an individual's attitudes toward abortion can not be responsible for his education, religion, marital status or views toward extramarital sex[4].

There are a number of possible outcomes of controlling for a third variable. We will be concentrating on two of these outcomes:

1. We will want to determine whether the asymmetrical relationships are real or if they can be attributed to an extraneous variable. This outcome

occurs when there is no direct relationship between the dependent and independent variables but a relationship appears because both variables are affected by variation in the third variable. For example, we may find a relationship between attitudes toward abortion and frequency of church attendance only to find that the antecedent variable education is implicated - frequent church attenders are more opposed to abortion, not because of their religious commitment, but because of the inverse relationship between education and frequency of church attendance. Frequent church attenders appear to be more opposed to abortion because most of them have only low levels of education. When the initial relationship can be entirely explained by variation in a third variable, we refer to that relationship as spurious. We should point out that "perfect" spurious relationships are highly unlikely. What we mean, operationally, by a spurious relationship is a situation in which some antecedent variable substantially reduces the covariation between an independent and dependent variable.

2. We will also be looking for conditional relationships. A conditional relationship is said to occur when there is a direct relationship between the dependent and independent variable only when the third variable

has a certain value. When the relationship is evaluated for one value of the test factor, a correlation will be apparent, but when the relationship is evaluated at another value no correlation will be seen, or the degree of relationship will differ radically. For example, the normative aspect of our theory predicts that women will be more opposed to abortion than men because they have a greater investment in, and commitment to, the traditional norms. Arguing on the same grounds, we would expect to find that the difference between men and women will be greater among married than unmarried respondents and greater among married respondents with children than among married respondents without children. Looking at these relationships will help us confirm, modify or dismiss our theory.

We have chosen tabular analysis as our method of proceeding fully aware of its shortcomings. Its principal problems seem to be the following (Selvin, 1968):

1. There is no overall measure of statistical completeness. If we were using a multiple correlation coefficient, we could square it to get the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable that was explained by the independent variables. At every stage, the analyst knows exactly how much of the variation

has been explained and how much remains. For cross-tabulation, though, no comparable statistic exists that can adequately handle large numbers of independent variables. At any given point, we do not know whether we have explained much or little of the variation and, correspondingly, whether we should continue to introduce additional variables.

2. The need for large sample sizes. Tabular analysis requires an enormous number of cases. Even with large samples, the number of independent variables that can be considered jointly is usually four or five at the most; percentage comparisons involving finer divisions are usually based on too few cases to be statistically stable. Moreover, one can usually find many variables that have effects on the dependent variable but be unable to examine the joint effects of all of the apparently important variables at one go. This inability makes the interpretation of any relation between independent and dependent variables somewhat ambiguous. Regression, in contrast, can handle dozens of variables at one time, so that it is fairly easy to ascertain the meaning of an observed relation between independent and dependent variables.

3. Lack of a systematic search procedure. Tabular analysis provides no clues at the beginning of the

analysis as to what independent variables are the best predictors of the dependent variables. It becomes a slow task of running independent variables against dependent variables to pick up the major factors. Regression analysis, in contrast, rapidly arranges the independent variables in their order of predictive power, thus eliminating, not only a great deal of time, but the possibility of overlooking a given variable[5].

In emphasizing the faults of tabular analysis, we have likely given a somewhat slanted picture. Multivariate statistics, such as regression, have serious problems of their own. In fact, it is precisely because of the two major problems with regression that we chose crosstabulation as our method of analysis. First of all, regression was developed to be used with interval data. Many of our variables are nominal. It is possible to use regression with nominally scaled variables, by transforming them into sets of "dummy variables", but we felt more comfortable with using tabular analysis. The second major problem with regression was its inability to detect and represent statistical interaction. In its standard form, regression assumes no interaction. This was a major problem for our study, because if the previous literature had suggested anything to us, it was that there was interaction. We decided, for these reasons, to proceed with tabular analysis. It had, in addition, the advantage of being familiar and meaningful to even relatively naive readers.

Footnotes

1. The discussion of NORC's sampling design draws heavily from the 1972 and 1973 codebooks (pages 49-53 and pages 71 and 72 respectively) and Sudman's book Reducing the Cost of Surveys.
2. 1960 was the last year for which Census figures were available. NORC will use the current set of PSU's until the 1970 Census figures are available.
3. Namboodiri is presently involved in developing a model that integrates the normative and economic frameworks. See his two 1973 articles.
4. While an individual's attitudes toward abortion can clearly not be responsible for his education, age or sex, we are less certain that the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex is asymmetrical. We would argue that attitudes toward premarital sex are developed prior to attitudes toward abortion, however we are aware that counterarguments are possible. The dependent status of the abortion variables is, however, a function of the focus of the thesis.
5. This assumes that all variables that influence the dependent variable have been identified and measured.

Chapter 3

TREND ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction to Trend Analysis

Until relatively recently, the legal and moral restrictions on contraception and abortion have been quite severe. Government policy, through legal penalties against abortion and the advertisement of contraceptives, had taken a stand which had the effect of rewarding reproduction and discouraging birth limitation. Recently this stand seems to have been shifting. Overt legal discrimination against the advertisement of contraceptives is declining, while the establishment of family limitation clinics is increasing. And abortion, where traditionally the laws have been some of the most repressive of pronatalist policies, is becoming increasingly more available. In accordance with the United States Supreme Court's 1973 decision, it is now possible in many states for a woman to terminate her pregnancy virtually by request up to 24 weeks of gestation.

Along with these liberalizing legal changes, there have been liberalizing changes in people's attitudes toward fertility and fertility-related matters. With regard to abortion, Judith Blake undertook an analysis of the changes in views on abortion among white Americans during the decade 1960 to 1970 and found that disapproval had declined. All categories of individuals (Blake controlled for sex, education, religion and age) showed a greater acceptance of abortion at the end of the decade than they did at the beginning. Blake's data were drawn from five Gallup polls taken during the period 1962 through 1969[1] and from the 1965 National Fertility Study conducted by Ryder and Westoff. Our 1972 and 1973 NORC data on attitudes toward abortion are comparable with the previous data, thus in this section we shall continue Blake's trend analysis. Blake's aim was to know the direction in which public opinion on attitudes toward abortion was moving and we shall pick up this aim and see how attitudes toward abortion have changed, particularly in light of the recent abortion reforms.

3.2 Comparison of Data Sets

As previously mentioned, Blake's data were drawn from five Gallup polls taken during the period 1962 through 1969 and from the 1965 National Fertility Study. Our data are from the 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys. The Gallup polls, like the NORC surveys, interviewed both men and women. The National Fertility Study, however, limited itself to interviewing only married women living with their husbands. The polls sampled individuals 21 years of age and over; the NORC surveys included anyone 18 years of age and over. The age limitation of the National Fertility Study was that the woman be under the age of 55. Although there were differences in who were included, all sources of data were national samples. The 1965 National Fertility Study employed an areal probability sample, the Gallup polls used quota samples with quotas based on geographic area, community size, sex, age and education, and the NORC samples combined a probability sample with a quota sample.

The Gallup polls asked their respondents whether they thought "abortion operations should or should not be legal" where:

a. the health of the mother was in danger,

b. the child might have been born deformed,

c. the family did not have enough money to support another child.

At Blake's request, the three polls in 1968 and 1969 added a fourth condition:

d. where the parents simply had all the children they wanted although there would have been no major health or financial problems involved in having another child.

The National Fertility Study had a somewhat different introduction to a total of six questions. They asked their respondents whether they thought "it would be all right for a woman to have a pregnancy interrupted":

a. if the pregnancy seriously endangered the woman's health,

b. if the woman was not married,

c. if the couple could not afford another child,

d. if they didn't want any more children,

e. if the woman had good reason to believe the child might be deformed, and

f. if the woman had been raped.

Blake found that the difference in the introductory wording to the questions resulted in less acceptance of abortion among respondents to the National Fertility Study than among respondents to the Gallup polls (except in the case of the "mother's health"). This she attributed to the slightly different questions the two were asking. The Gallup polls asked their respondents whether they would approve making abortion legal. The National Fertility Study asked its respondents whether they would approve the termination of a pregnancy. Some may have felt the National Fertility Study question was a query of whether they felt abortion was "all right" - legally, morally or both. Despite the slightly imperfect comparability of the questions, the group differentials in the National Fertility Study were similar to those in the Gallup polls (although at a slightly lower level of approval), and the two sources of data were felt to be similar enough to warrant their use in the trend analysis.

The 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys asked their respondents whether or not they thought "it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion" under the same six circumstances as the National Fertility Study. It asks its respondents what they feel the legal status of abortion should be in a manner similar to that used by the Gallup polls and it avoids the moral overtones of the National Fertility Study question.

It thus appears that, although there are differences between the data sets, the results are comparable. Differences between age inclusion levels, sampling designs and wording of abortion questions will have to be kept in mind, but, all told, it seems permissible to compare the results of the National Fertility Study, the Gallup polls, and the NORC surveys. The analysis will have to omit responses to the question of abortion when the woman is not married or has been raped because Blake did not include data on these reasons.

3.3 Findings

We will initially present the results for white Americans over the time period of our analysis (1962 - 1973) and then divide the population according to Catholic and non-Catholic affiliation. Among the non-Catholics, we shall present the results according to the respondent's sex, age and educational achievement. Among Catholics, we shall present the results according to sex only because this is all the data that Blake gives.

3.3.1 Attitudes Held by White Americans by Sex

Throughout the decade there was little disapproval of abortion when the woman's health was in danger, some disapproval when the child may have been born deformed and fairly strong disapproval when the abortion was to be performed because the parents could not afford, or did not want, another child. The relative levels of disapproval between questions were maintained throughout the decade, however disapproval declined for all four conditions.

Disapproval of abortion when the mother's health was in danger declined from 16 percent for males and females in 1962 to 6 percent in 1973 (Table 3.1). Today, very few Americans would not grant an abortion to a woman when her health was endangered by her pregnancy. Disapproval of abortion when there was a possibility that the child might be born deformed declined from 29 percent in 1962 to 13 percent in 1973 (Table 3.1). Americans are less likely to grant an abortion when it is the child's health that is in danger. Disapproval of abortion when the family could not afford another child declined from 74 percent in 1962 to 44 percent in 1973 (Table 3.1) and, finally, disapproval of abortion when the woman does not want any more children declined from 91 percent (women only) in 1965 to 49 percent in 1973 (men and women, 54 percent disapprove among women only). We should also point out the decline between 1972 and 1973. Within only a year span, disapproval of the legalization of abortion dropped by an average of 4 percentage points.

Table 3.1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by sex. Percent who do not approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. The 1962, 1965b, 1968a, 1968b and 1969 studies are Gallup polls, the 1965a study is the National Fertility Study, and the 1972 and 1973 studies are the NORC surveys.

	1962	1965a	1965b	1968a	1968b	1969	1972	1973
Conditions								
Mother's health								
males	15		13	11	10	13	10	5
females	17	11	16	10	11	14	11	7
total	16	11	15	10	10	13	10	6
Defect in fetus								
males	28		29	23	20	23	16	14
females	30	45	32	26	25	27	18	13
total	29	45	31	25	22	25	17	13
Economic problems								
males	73		71	72	63	66	46	40
females	74	87	76	73	73	69	47	47
total	74	87	74	72	68	68	46	44
Family control								
males				82	78	77	54	43
females		91		88	85	81	58	54
total		91		85	81	79	56	49
N	1391	4418	1428	1482	1427	1448	1348	1308

The sharpest decreases in levels of disapproval were in the less acceptable reasons. That is, there was a decline of 42 percentage points in disapproval of abortion throughout the decade when the woman did not want any more children, a decline of 30 percentage points when the family could not afford any more children, a decline of 16 percentage points when the baby might have been born deformed, and a decline of only 10 percentage points in disapproval of abortion when the mother's health was in danger. This suggests that there may be some convergence in the future between the disapproval level for all reasons. Disapproval in the case of the mother's health cannot decline much more and it may be that the level of disapproval for the other reasons will slowly catch up to it.

Throughout the decade, women were slightly more disapproving for all four reasons for abortion than men were (Table 3.1). The differences were not large, however they were consistent over time and over the various reasons for abortion.

3.3.2 Attitudes Held by Non-Catholics

Confining ourselves to non-Catholics, we find that educational level is a significant variable in accounting for differences in disapproval of abortion (Table 3.2). Throughout the decade, the greatest disapproval comes from respondents in the lowest educational brackets. For example, in the case of abortion because of a defect in the fetus, in 1973 only 7 percent of the college educated males disapproved as compared to 23 percent of the grade-school educated. Among women in 1973, the percentages were 1 percent and 18 percent. This phenomena is also apparent in the early part of the decade. For example, in the case of abortion because of the mother's health, in 1962

Table 3.2 Attitudes of white non-Catholic Americans toward abortion by sex and education. Percent who do not approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data sources as in Table 3.1.

	1962	1965a	1965b	1968a	1968b	1969	1972	1973
				MALES				
Mother's health								
college	4		4	2	2	5	3	3
high	12		11	10	7	9	8	4
grade	10		18	7	14	22	10	9
Defect in fetus								
college	19		18	16	14	14	3	7
high	21		25	22	16	19	16	9
grade	25		30	19	23	28	20	23
Economic problems								
college	70		63	59	47	50	22	22
high	74		72	73	64	71	47	34
grade	69		68	74	66	66	61	54
Family control								
college				72	69	63	30	23
high				86	80	83	51	41
grade				81	76	79	74	54
N	520		504	543	543	539	465	446
				FEMALES				
Mother's health								
college	6	3	5	1	3	4	5	1
high	6	6	9	8	9	9	6	6
grade	20	14	18	12	15	28	19	8
Defect in fetus								
college	15	27	21	13	10	9	8	1
high	21	41	26	23	24	21	10	11
grade	30	55	31	15	27	42	33	18
Economic problems								
college	69	80	67	64	62	61	27	21
high	74	88	78	73	74	66	43	44
grade	66	85	67	66	78	76	56	63
Family control								
college		83		80	76	70	38	29
high		92		91	86	81	56	50
grade		89		90	84	86	73	75
N	539	3180	544	548	511	512	493	489

only 4 percent of the college educated disapproved of legalizing abortion as compared to 10 percent of the grade-school educated. Among women in 1962, the corresponding percentages were 6 percent and 20 percent. The only exceptions to this pattern are seen for the less acceptable reasons - abortion for economic reasons and as a method of family control - in the first part of the decade. In 1962 and 1965, neither men nor women show a relationship between education and attitudes toward abortion. In fact, for these two reasons, it is not until 1972 and 1973 that definite increases in acceptance of abortion can be seen to be related to increases in education.

Disapproval of abortion has declined throughout the decade within all educational categories; however, the rates of change per class are different. If we compare the average of the two earliest surveys (1962, 1965b) with the two latest (1972, 1973), we find that in the case of abortion to protect the mother's health the difference between the grade-school and college educated has narrowed from 10 to 7 percentage points for men and from 14 to 11 percentage points for women. There is still a gap between the attitudes of the college and grade-school educated, but for the question of abortion to save the mother's life it is narrowing.

In the case of abortion because of defect in the fetus, when we compare the average of the two earliest with the two latest surveys, we find that the difference between the grade-school and college educated increased from 8 to 16 percentage points for men, and from 12 to 22 percentage points for women. In the case of abortion because the family cannot afford any more children, we find, on comparing the average of the two earliest surveys with the two latest, that the difference between the grade-school and college educated increased from 2 to 36 percentage points for men, and from 1 to 36 percentage points for women. In the case of abortion because the woman does not want any more children, we find again a widening gap between the college and grade-school educated. When we compare the average of the two earliest surveys (1968a, 1968b) with the two latest (1972, 1973), we find that the difference between the grade-school and college educated increased from 7 to 38 percentage points for men, and from 7 to 41 percentage points for women. For these three reasons for abortion - abortion in the case of defect in the fetus, economic problems, and lack of desire for more children - there is an increasing gap between the attitudes of the college educated and the attitudes of the grade-school educated.

In discussing the differential rates of change, we averaged the 1972 and 1973 rates of disapproval to partially eliminate any random fluctuations in the data. There were instances, though, when the 1972 and 1973 rates were so dissimilar as to make averaging questionable. This again points up the rapid increase in acceptance of abortion between 1972 and 1973[2]. In this case, however, if we looked at 1972 and 1973 separately, and compared each with the average of the two earliest surveys, we would come up with similar findings. For each reason for abortion except mother's health, the attitudes of the college educated group changed most rapidly, with the consequence that educational differences widened throughout the decade.

Turning to age differences, we see that the trends that Blake saw between the years 1962 and 1969 are not, by and large, evident in the 1972 and 1973 data. She found that those aged 45 and over of both sexes disfavored abortion on grounds of the mother's health more than those under 45. There is some evidence of this trend for women in the 1972 and 1973 data (Table 3.3); for men, however, there is virtually no difference in the attitudes of those of different ages. In regard to attitudes toward abortion in the case of child deformity, Blake found that between 1962 and

Table 3.3 Attitudes of white non-Catholic Americans toward abortion by sex and age. Percent who do not approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data sources as in Table 3.1.

	1962	1965a	1965b	1968a	1968b	1969	1972	1973
MALES								
Mother's health								
under 30	8		9	8	7	7	5	5
30 - 44	8		9	5	4	8	8	6
45+	11		12	8	9	13	7	4
Defect in fetus								
under 30	28		24	28	22	16	12	12
30 - 44	26		28	17	19	21	12	11
45+	17		23	19	14	20	12	11
Economic problems								
under 30	82		67	69	62	61	37	29
30 - 44	75		74	67	63	63	46	38
45+	68		67	70	57	65	40	34
Family control								
under 30				76	74	66	43	32
30 - 44				80	77	79	52	40
45+				82	75	77	49	38
N	520		504	543	543	539	465	446
FEMALES								
Mother's health								
under 30	7	8	11	6	6	7	3	2
30 - 44	6	6	7	4	7	9	9	4
45+	13	7	11	8	10	13	11	7
Defect in fetus								
under 30	22	42	32	15	16	16	9	10
30 - 44	22	39	26	22	22	21	12	7
45+	22	36	24	18	23	24	18	11
Economic problems								
under 30	83	88	76	70	76	62	39	36
30 - 44	72	85	78	73	75	68	40	37
45+	66	84	71	67	68	68	45	45
Family control								
under 30		92		90	84	82	51	41
30 - 44		89		89	85	80	50	47
45+		88		86	83	77	58	54
N	539	3180	544	548	511	512	493	489

and 1969 the young were more likely than the old to disapprove. We find, in the 1972 and 1973 data, that this age pattern is also disappearing. For men, there is no relationship between attitudes and age; for women, there seems to be some evidence that those over 45 are more negative than those under 45.

Blake found, in regard to permitting abortion on economic grounds, that early in the decade 75 percent of the young men and 80 percent of the young women (1962, 1965b) were opposed to legalizing abortion as compared to only about 2/3 of both men and women 45 years of age and older. By 1969, she saw that this age differential was disappearing. Our 1972 and 1973 data indicate that rather than the age differential disappearing, it is reversing. The older respondents are, if anything, more opposed to abortion now than the younger respondents.

With regard to abortion when the woman does not want any more children, Blake found that through the years 1965 and 1969, young women (those under 30) were consistently more opposed to abortion than older women. Young men, on the other hand, she found to be consistently more in favor than older men. The 1972 and 1973 data confirm the trend for men but indicate a reversal of the trend for women. By 1972/1973, for both men and women, the young are more in favor of elective abortion than the old. We should note, however, that the differences are fairly small and, in the case of men, it is the middle-aged group (30-44) that are most opposed.

There appears to be changing patterns of relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion between the years 1962 and 1973. The relationship early in the decade seemed to indicate that, by and large, the young were more opposed to legalizing abortion than the old. By the end of the decade, if there was any relationship between age and attitudes, it was the old that were more opposed to legalizing abortion than the young.

Possible sex differences in attitudes toward abortion of non-Catholics can also be seen from Tables 3.2 and 3.3. On the issue of abortion to preserve the mother's health and in the case of possible child deformity, there is little difference between the attitudes of males and females. There is a slight tendency for women to be more opposed to abortion for economic reasons than men and this becomes more pronounced in the case of abortion where the woman does not want any more children. These differences in attitudes have been stable since 1962 and it appears that, while there is no difference between the attitudes of males and females for the socially acceptable reasons for abortion, men are more liberal than women when abortion is justified on more discretionary grounds.

3.3.3 Attitudes Held by Catholics

Turning to the attitudes of Catholics, we see that, in general, they disapprove of legalizing abortion more than non-Catholics (Table 3.4)[3]. Blake found that, up until 1969, the largest differences between Catholics and non-Catholics occurred with regard to justifications that were least disapproved by both religious groups - the mother's health and child deformity. There were differences between Catholics and non-Catholics on economic and elective issues, but they were not as great as the differences for the more acceptable reasons. This pattern reverses itself in 1972-1973. We find here that the largest differences between Catholics and non-Catholics occurs with regard to the generally less acceptable reasons - abortion for economic reasons and abortion because the mother does not want any more children. The reason this pattern changes is not because the differences between Catholics and non-Catholics declines on the

Table 3.4 Attitudes of white Catholic and non-Catholic Americans toward abortion. Percent who do not approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data sources as in Table 3.1.

	1962	1965a	1965b	1968a	1968b	1969	1972	1973
Conditions								
Mother's health								
Catholic	36	22	27	19	18	20	16	10
non-Cath	10	7	10	7	7	10	8	5
Defect in fetus								
Catholic	53	57	25	39	32	37	26	21
non-Cath	22	40	25	19	19	20	13	10
Economic problems								
Catholic	82	91	80	81	75	74	58	59
non-Cath	71	86	71	69	66	65	41	37
Family control								
Catholic		94		86	86	83	67	64
non-Cath		90		84	79	78	51	43
N								
Catholic	332	1238	380	392	373	397	390	369
non-Cath	1059	3180	1048	1091	1054	1051	958	935

more acceptable reasons - it in fact remains fairly stable - but because, on the less acceptable reasons, non-Catholics are changing their attitudes much more rapidly than Catholics. For example, if we compare an average of the first two surveys (1962, 1965b) with the last two surveys (1972, 1973) on attitudes toward abortion if the family cannot afford any more children, we find that while white Catholic men reduced their disapproval by only 6 percentage points, non-Catholic men reduced their disapproval by 33 percentage points. Disapproval of abortion is declining

Table 3.5 Attitudes of white Catholic Americans toward abortion by sex. Percent who do not approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data sources as in Table 3.1.

	1962	1965a	1965b	1968a	1968b	1969	1972	1973
Conditions								
Mother's health								
males	33		22	20	17	19	16	6
females	39	22	31	19	18	22	15	14
Defect in fetus								
males	51		24	33	30	32	25	20
females	54	57	26	45	33	41	27	21
Economic problems								
males	78		77	81	72	71	58	56
females	85	91	83	81	78	76	58	61
Family control								
males				85	84	80	67	61
females		94		88	88	87	68	67
N	332	1238	380	392	373	397	390	369

for both Catholics and non-Catholics; however it is declining much more rapidly for non-Catholics, particularly when abortion is justified on less acceptable grounds.

Blake observed a sex differential in attitudes toward abortion - with females being less favorable towards legalizing abortion than males - between 1962 and 1969. The 1972 and 1973 data indicate that this sex differential is diminishing (Table 3.5). Certainly in 1972 there is no difference between the attitudes of males and females. In 1973, females are slightly less liberal than males, but the difference is, on average, only 5 percentage points. It remains to be seen if the slightly greater disapproval among women in 1973 is a continuation of a trend that was obscured by chance fluctuation in 1972 or if it is itself a chance fluctuation.

3.4 Summary of Findings

We will conclude this chapter by summarizing our results and outlining the guidelines they suggest for our future analysis. The major finding the trend analysis revealed was the rapidly growing acceptance for legalizing abortion under any circumstance throughout the decade. The reasons for abortion seem to fall into two categories - abortion for reasons of health (mother's health and defect in fetus) and abortion as a means of birth control (economic problems and family control). For both categories, acceptance grew. Abortion for health reasons was always fairly well accepted; it was in the cases of abortion as a birth control measure that acceptance increased rapidly. For example, abortion for the most extreme condition - the woman simply not wanting any more children - was opposed by 91 percent of the population in 1962, while in 1973 only one-half of the population was opposed. If these trends continue, it will not be long before a clear majority of the population approve of legalizing abortion under any circumstance.

We found, for non-Catholics, that education was an important variable in determining attitudes toward abortion, and although there was a general increase in acceptance of abortion throughout the decade, this increase was not the same in each educational category. For each reason for abortion except mother's health, the attitudes of the college-educated changed, in the direction of acceptance, more rapidly than the attitudes of the elementary educated. The result of this differential rate of change was substantially widening educational differences among non-Catholics in attitudes toward abortion.

We also found a widening gap between the attitudes of Catholics and non-Catholics. Early in the decade, Blake found that eliminating Catholics from the population under study lessened disapproval of legalizing abortion only slightly. By 1973, we found reasonably large differences between Catholics and non-Catholics, particularly in the cases where abortion was being considered for the less acceptable reasons. The disapproval of Catholics is declining; however, it is declining much more rapidly for non-Catholics.

We should point out that education may be involved in this widening gap between the attitudes of Catholics and non-Catholics. A possible interpretation of the change may be an increasing concentration of highly educated individuals among the non-Catholics. Because we do not have trend data on the educational levels of Catholics we can not test this hypothesis here. However, in Chapter 5, where we consider religious affiliation, we will investigate the possibility.

The trend analysis revealed no substantial or pronounced differences between the attitudes of males and females toward abortion. Certainly on the issue of abortion for health reasons, there were no differences between men and women. The men showed slightly more liberal attitudes than the women when abortion was justified on the more discretionary grounds, but percentage differences were small and there were exceptions.

There were also no substantial differences between the attitudes of those of different ages toward abortion. Early in the decade, there was some indication that the young were more opposed to legalizing abortion than the old. By 1973, there was virtually no relationship between age and attitudes. Any percentage differences that there were indicated that the old were more opposed to legalizing abortion than the young, although, even these percentage differences were small. It is impossible, however, to test for various intervening or suppressing variables in the relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion with Blake's data. In Chapter 4, however, where we consider age and various control variables in connection with attitudes toward abortion, we will investigate the relationship more thoroughly.

According to our normative theory, we would predict those individuals least tied into the traditional moral and religious structure of society to be most responsive to social change concerning the redefinition of abortion laws. In terms of our variables, this would include the educated, the non-Catholic, men and the young (see Section 2.3 and introductions to Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 for the full discussion of why these groups were expected to be least tied to the traditional social norms). Data from the trend analysis are consistent with the first two expectations, inconsistent with the third and, given the previous relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion, provide minimal support for the fourth. In succeeding chapters, we shall look more rigorously at these variables in connection with attitudes toward abortion - following interaction leads and trying to more clearly specify the nature of the relationships.

Footnotes

1. The Gallup polls for which information on attitudes toward abortion are available are: the August 1962 poll, the December 1965 poll, the May 1968 poll, the December 1968 poll, and the October 1969 poll.
2. It should be noted that, although the general pattern is for increasing acceptance of abortion between 1972 and 1973, there are exceptions to the pattern. The exceptions, however, follow no trend - i.e. they are not limited to one sex or to a specific educational category - and the decrease is in no instance particularly large.
3. We should point out that the comparison of Catholics with non-Catholics is misleading because of the interaction between religious preference and education (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, this is the only type of comparison that can be made given the data.

Chapter 4

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

4.1 Introduction to Analysis

In sections 1.3 and 2.3 of this thesis, we explained how the normative and utilitarian approaches to family size had been brought together in fertility literature and how these ideas were applicable to attitudes toward abortion. To repeat, to the extent that economic considerations of utility applied to decisions affecting whether one was for or against abortion, the factors involved would fall into a hierarchy of preferences. But, to the extent that moral norms were operative, the decision concerning abortion would be made without consideration of utilities. Because we felt that, at least presently, moral norms were predominant in decisions concerning legalizing abortion, we decided to initially hypothesize the views on abortion of several sub-groups in the population along normative grounds. If these moral norms were not adequately explaining the attitudes, we could shift to the economic framework.

In this chapter, we shall look at the relationship between various demographic variables and attitudes toward abortion. We shall argue that those groups which are subject to greater exposure to the traditional values will be less liberal toward legalizing abortion than those whose experiences have tended to reduce the strength of these norms. More specifically, we expect:

1. Men to be more liberal than women, because women tend to be reared in closer contact to the norm-enforcing institutions of family, church and school. There is a wealth of literature outlining these differences between male and female socialization (for a bibliography of this literature, see Aldous and Hill, 1967 and Goode, Hopkins and McClure, 1971). For just one example, let us quote from Reiss (1971, p. 174):

> "The female role in our society is more closely attached to the family institution than is the male role. By this I mean that the primary goal of the vast majority of females is to get married and to bear and rear children. The primary goal of the vast majority of males is to find a job and develop their rewards over the years from that job. ... This greater stress on marital and family roles means that the female will be more closely tied to the marital and family institutions and the parental values they embody."

Alice Rossi (1966, 1967) and Judith Blake (1971), in their articles on abortion, both hypothesized that males would be more liberal toward legalizing abortion than females for similar reasons to those we outlined.

2. The young to be more liberal than the old, because the young do not have the investment or commitment to the traditional norms that the old have (Reiss, 1971, pp. 175-176). The argument here is that the young have not yet "taken up" their future roles and, thus, lack some of the commitment to the traditional norms they will develop in later years. As Reiss explains it (1971, p. 175):

> "This would be so (the differences between men and and women would be at their minimum), for during those years (the courtship years) the males have not yet begun to work - or if they have, they have not yet become fully committed to their jobs. At the same time, the females are single and have the highest degree of autonomy from the home they will ever possess, for they have not yet begun their marital and family roles. In short, both sexes are relatively uncommitted to the key roles that will eventually distinguish them later in life."

Additional support for this hypothesis comes from studies dealing with the political ideology of older people. Other than on a few issues affecting self-interest, older people tend to be more conservative than younger people (Riley and Foner, 1968, p. 473). Studies in many areas emphasize the traditional positions maintained by older people (Campbell, et al., 1960, pp. 210-211; Stouffer, 1965, p. 93; Hyman and Sheatsley, 1964, pp. 22-23; Erskine, 1962, pp. 142, 148; Erskine, 1965, pp. 332, 495; Erskine, 1961, p. 301; Erskine, 1964, p. 342). In contrast with younger age categories, older people seem to show greater commitment and investment to the traditional norms.

3. The highly educated to be more liberal than the lesser educated. The one finding that all previous abortion studies have pointed out is the influence education has on attitudes toward abortion (Rossi, 1966, 1967; Westoff, et al., 1969; Blake, 1971). The more education an individual has, the more liberal he or she is towards legalizing abortion. For this finding to be explained by the normative theory, one would have to make the assumption that education is a liberalizing influence - the more education, the less one is "tied to" the traditional norms. This is the assumption that Rossi makes (1967, p. 37):

> "Liberal views should be positively correlated with increasing education, since education represents training in judging problems to some extent on rational grounds."

This is not an unreasonable assumption. Evidence indicates that education does in fact discourage bigotry, ethnocentrism and narrowmindedness, while leading to more tolerant and humanitarian attitudes (Lipset, 1963, p. 69; Burton Clark, 1962, p. 30). Numerous studies (i.e. Selvin and Hagstrom, 1960; Theodore Newcomb, 1943; James Trent and Leland Medsker, 1968), which have considered students' attitudes toward civil liberties by a variety of factors (including subject major, parental class level, occupational goals and fraternity-nonfraternity affiliation), have found that the greatest differences were obtained according to year in college. Selvin and Hagstrom (1960), for example, found that only one freshman in five but almost half the seniors were classified as "highly" libertarian.

Rainwater (1960, pp. 82-86) outlines another reason why education could influence attitudes toward abortion. For lower educated females, motherhood is more completely their reason for being than it is for women with more education. Better educated women are taught the value of, and given the opportunity for, establishing their validity as a person through activities largely unavailable to a woman with little education. Having children looms very large in lower educated women's efforts to assure themselves that they are respectable and worthwhile. They are naturally loathe to admit the legitimacy of laws which would allow individuals the right to "turn off" such a hallowed institution as the family through the simple mechanism of an abortion (Blake, 1971, p. 545).

For lower educated men, a similar mechanism is working. Since they tend to feel ineffective and weak in relation to their world, fathering a string of children comes to represent a kind of defiant demonstration that they are real men (Rainwater, 1960, pp. 84-85). Their reluctance to approve of laws which would relegate children to an "option" is understandable for the same reasons it was understandable for the lower-educated females.

4. Urban dwellers tend to be more liberal than rural dwellers, because urban dwellers are further removed from a traditional society than are rural dwellers. Although the literature on the nature of the modern city is marked by disagreements (Sjoberg, 1968), there is consensus that the differences between those who live in the city and those who live in the country include a whole way of life (Green, 1964). Such sociologists as Tonnies and Simmel have outlined the basic rural-urban distinctions. The rural dweller belongs to primary groups - family, neighborhood, church parish - with an overlapping membership, where each intimately knows all others and shares mutual sympathy, understanding and experience. The urban dweller, on the other hand, is depicted as belonging to few if any secondary groups and

having at best only a tenuous commitment to the traditional social norms.

Maxwell (1970), the only researcher who considered size of place of residence in relation to attitudes toward abortion, found that the urban dwellers were more liberal than the rural dwellers. He accounts for the finding in a way similar to that outlined above (p. 251):

> "City residents are more liberal than rural residents, probably because of greater exposure to the idea of abortion. More sophisticated news media, greater emphasis on personal freedom as opposed to social obligation, weakened church influence, a more progressive clergy, enlightened sex education in public schools, and greater acceptance of sexuality characterize urban areas."

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Age and Sex

Table 4.1 shows the differences between men and women of different ages in their attitudes toward abortion. Age was broken down into categories corresponding to those used in previous studies. Additional groupings were added to the upper end of the scale because first, the sample size allowed it and second, age has been a controversial variable in previous studies and we felt

Table 4.1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by age and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

1972

	under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65	over 65	Total
Conditions							
Mother's health							
males	93	90	87	88	88	73	86
females	89	92	79	87	81	77	84
Defect in fetus							
males	76	86	76	88	77	67	78
females	83	86	73	76	69	68	76
Rape							
males	71	81	76	85	80	68	77
females	82	84	73	77	75	74	77
Economic problems							
males	51	52	44	57	43	39	48
females	51	51	51	48	42	36	47
Unmarried							
males	50	47	40	53	40	34	44
females	48	44	39	45	36	29	40
Family control							
males	49	44	40	47	38	30	41
females	39	40	37	43	32	26	36
N							
males	94	152	96	137	105	88	
females	66	156	109	124	107	111	

1973

	under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65	over 65	Total
Conditions							
Mother's health							
males	96	93	97	91	92	92	94
females	97	90	90	90	84	94	91
Defect in fetus							
males	87	88	85	80	83	81	84
females	88	86	87	86	78	84	84

Table 4.1 continued

Table 4.1 continued

	under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65	over 65	Total
Rape							
males	91	81	84	83	83	80	84
females	80	85	84	83	76	84	82
Economic problems							
males	67	59	56	58	54	54	58
females	58	51	49	56	43	40	50
Unmarried							
males	54	56	54	58	48	46	53
females	56	49	45	51	47	37	48
Family control							
males	62	59	51	59	48	46	54
females	50	49	40	43	37	29	41
N							
males	96	118	108	93	99	96	
females	93	146	134	124	108	90	

that the more categories included the better.

Among the majority of the age groups, men were slightly more liberal than women, but the differences were generally negligible. Moreover, although the older respondents (both males and females) were less liberal in their views than the younger respondents, the differences were not substantial, and it was not always the extreme age categories that had the highest and lowest rates of approval[1]. If there were any patterns, it was for the less acceptable reasons. For abortion in the case where the woman simply did not want any more children, males were more liberal than females by 5 percentage points in 1972 and 13 percentage points in 1973; and those under 25 years of age were more liberal than those over 65 years of age by 19 percentage points (males) and 13 percentage points (females) in 1972 and 16 percentage points (males) and 21 percentage points (females) in 1973.

These findings are in opposition to previous findings. As outlined in the trend analysis chapter, both Blake (1971) and Westoff (1969) found that males were significantly more liberal than females and the old had higher rates of approval than the young. The lack of a strong sex difference may be explained by recent changes in the female role. A maternal, homemaking function is no longer the only option available to women and the normative theory would predict that as this became increasingly so - that is, there was less of a woman's self-esteem and identification wrapped up in the mother-wife role - women would be less likely to oppose abortion. Further tests of this hypothesis will be made in Chapter 6 where we consider marital status, family size and the working mother.

With regard to age, in the trend analysis chapter we saw that in the early part of the decade the young disapproved of abortion more than the old. By 1969, Blake observed that the age differential was disappearing. When we looked at the 1972 and 1973 data, we saw that rather than the age differential disappearing, it is reversing. This is what we had predicted on the grounds of the normative theory. Blake (1971, pp. 545-546) suggests an explanation of why the young were becoming as liberal towards abortion as the old which can also be used to explain why they are now more liberal. She suggests that the younger generation has developed demanding standards of birth prevention - standards that start from the 100 percent effectiveness[2] of the pill. There is less tolerance of imperfection in birth-control practice among the young today than there was among the "pre-pill" youngsters of several years ago. This, particularly in an era of increased exposure to sexual intercourse and, thus, increased risk of pregnancy, may go a long way toward explaining the increasingly liberal views of the young.

We will continue with age and sex as independent variables in our analysis, even though there appears to be only a slight relationship between them and views toward abortion. This is done because they have been widely used in previous literature and there is some indication that they may interact with other variables in relation to attitudes toward abortion in a significant manner. Nevertheless, the data utilizing these variables will be presented only where it seems warranted.

4.2.2 Education: Sex and Age

Table 4.2 presents the differences between men and women of varying levels of educational attainment in their attitudes toward abortion. Education was divided into the four categories: less than high school, high school, some college, and college graduate. Less than high school was operationalized as 11 years or less of education; high school implied 12 years of education; some college meant one, two or three years of college and college graduate stood for anything beyond that.

As predicted by our theory, those with higher levels of education are more liberal in their attitudes than those with lower educational levels. In the trend analysis, we saw that for non-Catholics the gap between the grade school and college educated differed according to question. We find the same pattern when we consider the entire group without reference to religion. As the reasons for abortion become less acceptable, the difference between the percent of grade-school educated and the percent of college educated who approve of abortion increases. For example, in 1973 there were 4 percentage points (males) and 11 percentage points (females) separating those with less than a high school education from those who had graduated from college in the case of abortion to protect the mother's health

Table 4.2 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by education and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972		1973	
	males	females	males	females
Conditions				
Mother's health				
grade school	80	78	90	89
high school	92	88	96	89
some college	89	89	98	94
college grad.	92	91	94	100
Defect in fetus				
grade school	71	71	75	78
high school	79	77	90	86
some college	87	80	93	88
college grad.	90	86	84	97
Rape				
grade school	67	67	70	75
high school	80	82	89	83
some college	86	84	95	87
college grad.	91	94	88	99
Economic problems				
grade school	30	32	48	37
high school	52	49	54	50
some college	61	58	67	56
college grad.	68	75	74	77
Unmarried				
grade school	29	27	40	35
high school	47	43	48	48
some college	55	49	65	54
college grad.	65	67	72	76
Family control				
grade school	27	25	42	27
high school	43	37	51	45
some college	50	45	65	49
college grad.	62	67	69	69
N				
grade school	246	257	212	231
high school	182	249	162	278
some college	127	105	123	111
college grad.	117	64	111	75

as compared to 27 percentage points (males) and 42 percentage points (females) separating the two groups in the case of abortion where the woman does not want any more children.

When we look at how sex interacts with education, we find, as Rossi did (1967, p. 38), that among the poorly educated there are no significant or consistent differences between men and women for any of the six conditions. Both sexes with less than a high school education are low in their approval of legalizing abortion in comparison with those who have been to college. Rossi did find, however, that among the college educated, there was an interesting interplay between sex and education (Rossi, 1967, p. 39). There was no difference in the attitudes of men and women in the cases of mother's health, deformity in the fetus and rape, but men were more favorable than the women in the cases where abortion was to be used as a birth control measure. Our data do not show evidence of this. Among the highly educated, as was the case with those of lower education, there are no significant or consistent differences between men and women.

These findings are predicted by our theory. Since education is by and large a liberalizing experience, we would predict that as amount of schooling increases, so do liberal attitudes toward abortion. We have already suggested one reason why the sex differences that were apparent in previous studies have failed to appear in our data. As women move away from the traditional norms and ideals of marriage and family, we would expect their attitudes to become more similar to men's.

Table 4.3 presents the relationship between education and attitudes toward abortion controlling for age. Age was collapsed into three categories - "under 30", "30 to 49", and "over 50" - so that there would be sufficient cases for analysis when education was held constant.

In the trend analysis chapter, we found, contrary to previous findings, that there was virtually no relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion. We raised the possibility that a variable such as education might have been suppressing the relationship, but were unable to test this hypothesis with Blake's data. Table 4.3 shows that education is not covering up a relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion. In the majority of educational categories, the young are neither clearly more or less liberal than the old. Differences attributable to varying educational levels are apparent, but age does not seem to

Table 4.3 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by age and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	under 30	30-49 years	over 50	under 30	30-49 years	over 50
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	88	80	76	97	89	88
high school	92	89	88	92	92	90
some college	92	89	84	98	95	94
college grad.	97	89	87	95	98	96
Defect in fetus						
grade school	83	76	65	76	79	76
high school	77	79	77	86	90	85
some college	86	83	82	93	90	88
college grad.	92	86	87	91	89	86
Rape						
grade school	62	68	67	70	74	73
high school	82	79	84	84	85	86
some college	85	82	88	93	89	91
college grad.	97	89	89	93	93	91
Economic problems						
grade school	30	30	32	43	44	41
high school	48	52	50	51	51	53
some college	65	52	62	68	60	56
college grad.	76	73	62	88	72	66
Unmarried						
grade school	25	28	28	36	38	37
high school	44	46	43	43	47	54
some college	59	45	53	67	60	50
college grad.	66	72	58	84	71	66
Family control						
grade school	29	27	25	43	33	33
high school	37	38	44	46	48	48
some college	56	38	50	64	58	47
college grad.	68	73	49	84	64	61
N						
grade school	69	162	271	63	137	241
high school	122	179	129	121	174	143
some college	79	84	68	91	79	64
college grad.	62	64	55	57	85	44

be significantly affecting attitudes.

There is some indication that in 1973, among those who have been to and those who have graduated from college, the young are more liberal than the old. This pattern, however, is not apparent in 1972. As was the case when we considered age and sex, there is the suggestion that the young are slightly more liberal than the old, but the relationship is quite weak and, particularly in 1972, there are exceptions. It appears that if the relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion holds anywhere, it is among those who have been to, and those who have graduated, from college. This would be expected if, in fact, it is the norms and values that individuals hold that explain attitudes toward abortion. We predicted that the young would be more liberal than the old, because the young have not yet taken up their future roles and, thus, lack some of the commitment to the traditional norms they will develop in later years. Since it is those individuals who attend college that are most likely to be able to delay taking up their future roles, we would expect the relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion to be most strong among them.

In the introduction to this chapter, we predicted that the highly educated would be more liberal than the lesser educated because education tends to have a liberalizing influence on individuals' norms and values. This prediction was confirmed - the more education a person has, the more liberal he or she is toward legalizing abortion.

4.2.3 Social Class - Income and Occupation

Socioeconomic status is a major variable in sociological research. We looked at one component of SES - education - and found it to be highly related to attitudes toward abortion. Knowing the high correlations traditionally found between education and the other components of SES - i.e. income and occupation - we would predict these variables to also be related to attitudes toward abortion. Rainwater's explanation of why education should be related to attitudes toward abortion is also applicable here. The options available to individuals with little income or low status occupations are usually very limited. The one area they stand a chance of achieving success in is "having a family". They are naturally loathe to legalize steps which would relegate children from their present hallowed position to one of a planned option. Looking at income and occupation will help us to come to a clearer understanding of how education works. We will be able to determine if it is education as a measure of socioeconomic status that affects attitudes toward abortion or whether it is the education process itself that is of importance.

Table 4.4 shows the relationship between family income and attitudes toward abortion. It was not felt necessary to control for sex here as we were considering total family income. The relationship was looked at controlling for marital status - married, not married - on the grounds that married individuals have two possible sources of income, but similar findings were found for both groups. The income cutpoints were arrived at by maximizing total cell frequencies within the initial coding system used by NORC.

When we look at the relationship between total family income and attitudes toward abortion, we find that as income increases, so do liberal attitudes toward abortion. For each reason for abortion, those earning less than $6,000 are less liberal than those earning over $15,000. In fact, for the three least acceptable reasons for abortion, there is an average difference between those earning less than $6,000 and those earning more than $15,000 of over 20 percentage points for both 1972 and 1973.

We looked at the relationship controlling for education because we felt that it might have been the

Table 4.4 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by total family income. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			
	under $6000	$6000-$9999	$10000-$14999	over $15000
Conditions				
Mother's health	78	87	88	92
Defect in fetus	67	80	81	84
Rape	66	77	81	86
Economic problems	38	46	49	58
Unmarried	33	38	43	58
Family control	31	36	37	54
N	307	303	346	276

	1973			
	under $6000	$6000-$9999	$10000-$14999	over $15000
Conditions				
Mother's health	92	90	91	95
Defect in fetus	79	84	84	90
Rape	76	83	83	90
Economic problems	46	50	51	66
Unmarried	41	48	48	62
Family control	38	45	47	59
N	295	251	323	345

strong relationship between income and education that was producing the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and income. Table 4.5 presents the results. We see that the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and income is not reducible to the influence of education. There are still differences between individuals of different income levels but of similar education. Moreover, we find an interesting interplay

Table 4.5 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by total family income and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			
	under $6000	$6000-$9999	$10000-$14999	over $15000
Conditions				
Mother's health				
grade school	73	80	85	92
high school	86	91	90	92
some college	80	91	89	94
college grad.	100	100	90	91
Defect in fetus				
grade school	61	75	79	81
high school	73	81	80	75
some college	77	79	84	93
college grad.	95	96	85	89
Rape				
grade school	58	67	74	75
high school	74	81	83	84
some college	80	85	80	91
college grad.	100	96	93	91
Economic problems				
grade school	28	34	33	35
high school	41	52	55	49
some college	60	53	50	74
college grad.	90	69	71	67
Unmarried				
grade school	24	30	28	40
high school	38	43	50	48
some college	53	43	42	67
college grad.	70	54	59	72
Family control				
grade school	24	29	24	29
high school	35	38	40	47
some college	40	34	36	67
college grad.	75	61	59	65
N				
grade school	191	121	104	48
high school	66	108	137	83
some college	30	47	64	70
college grad.	20	26	41	75

Table 4.5 continued

Table 4.5 continued

	1973			
	under $6000	$6000- $9999	$10000- $14999	over $15000
Conditions				
Mother's health				
grade school	91	85	91	94
high school	89	90	89	95
some college	97	92	96	97
college grad.	14/15	100	95	96
Defect in fetus				
grade school	73	78	80	85
high school	83	88	86	91
some college	95	87	92	90
college grad.	14/15	97	76	91
Rape				
grade school	70	77	76	78
high school	84	82	84	89
some college	85	90	90	96
college grad.	14/15	97	85	93
Economic problems				
grade school	42	36	50	54
high school	44	46	47	61
some college	55	71	57	65
college grad.	13/15	86	59	78
Unmarried				
grade school	33	34	49	52
high school	41	43	44	58
some college	58	71	55	61
college grad.	13/15	86	59	75
Family control				
grade school	31	29	47	44
high school	34	47	45	55
some college	52	63	53	61
college grad.	13/15	79	54	71
N				
grade school	175	109	70	46
high school	64	74	159	119
some college	40	38	51	92
college grad.	15	29	41	88

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

between attitudes toward abortion, income and education. Among those with some college, high school or less than high school, acceptance of abortion varies directly with total family income, but among college graduates, no such relationship appears. In fact, a reversal by income level is suggested, with those individuals with a total family income of over $15,000 appearing somewhat less favorable than those with a total family income of less than $6,000.

This relationship between income and attitudes toward abortion is as we would predict. Those individuals earning the larger salaries are the individuals less likely to have an investment in the traditional family norms (Rainwater, 1960, pp. 82-86) and, thus, less likely to oppose abortion. The only educational group that the relationship was not apparent in was the college graduates. One explanation is that the college graduates who earn less than $6,000 per year are a very select group - for example, college graduates involved in post-graduate studies or volunteer service - who also have only a small investment in the traditional norms surrounding the family.

Another explanation is that individuals with a college education are at a stage where utilitarian, rather than normative considerations influence their behavior. That is, because they are relatively free of the traditional norms, utilitarian factors are going to have a greater explanatory power than normative factors. This would account for why, among college graduates, those individuals with a total family income of less than $6,000 (the relatively poor) are most in favor of abortion.

Our next step was to look at the relationship between respondents' occupation and attitudes toward abortion. We considered males only. NORC used the 1960 United States Bureau of the Census 3-digit occupational classification to code occupation. We collapsed this scale into three categories. Our first category included professional, technical and kindred workers, managers, administrators (except farm) and sales workers. Our second category included clerical and kindred workers and craftsmen and kindred workers. Our third category included operators, laborers, farm managers, laborers and foremen and service workers (including private household).

Table 4.6 presents the results. We see that in both 1972 and 1973 there is the hypothesized relationship between occupation and attitudes toward abortion. As the prestige of the job increases, so do liberal attitudes toward abortion. When we were considering income and attitudes toward abortion, we found differences between the extreme categories of 20 percentage points. We find similar percentage differences here. For the three least acceptable reasons for abortion, the average difference between the professionals and the service workers is again over 20 percentage points.

Education was controlled for in the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and occupation for similar reasons it was controlled for above. Table 4.7 presents the results. We find that some of the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and occu-

Table 4.6 Attitudes of white American males toward abortion by occupation. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	prof. manag	clerk craft	service	prof. manag	clerk craft	service
Conditions						
Mother's health	91	90	79	94	91	95
Defect in fetus	87	82	69	87	84	80
Rape	85	82	66	89	83	77
Economic problems	58	51	36	63	58	51
Unmarried	57	45	31	61	52	43
Family control	52	43	30	63	54	42
N	217	246	210	254	159	197

Table 4.7 Attitudes of white American males toward abortion by occupation and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	prof. manag	clerk craft	service	prof. manag	clerk craft	service
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	86	87	73	89	85	93
high school	93	92	91	96	95	96
some college	95	87	77	96	100	100
college grad.	88	100	7/7	95	11/13	6/6
Defect in fetus						
grade school	75	79	64	77	73	75
high school	80	80	76	90	90	90
some college	95	84	73	95	96	82
college grad.	87	96	7/7	84	11/13	5/6
Rape						
grade school	68	75	60	77	73	67
high school	85	83	70	90	86	92
some college	87	89	77	96	96	91
college grad.	88	96	7/7	88	11/13	6/6
Economic problems						
grade school	46	34	24	54	46	47
high school	51	56	44	44	56	61
some college	62	60	58	70	79	45
college grad.	64	80	6/7	73	10/13	5/6
Unmarried						
grade school	50	33	20	40	42	38
high school	49	48	43	48	47	49
some college	57	58	46	69	71	45
college grad.	62	68	6/7	72	9/13	5/6
Family control						
grade school	46	30	21	57	44	37
high school	51	44	37	52	51	51
some college	48	53	50	70	75	36
college grad.	57	80	5/7	69	9/13	5/6
N						
grade school	28	95	123	35	59	118
high school	41	87	54	52	59	51
some college	63	38	26	73	28	22
college grad.	85	25	7	92	13	6

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

pation is reducible to the influence of education. For the three most acceptable reasons for abortion, and particularly for 1973, there are only small differences between the attitudes of service workers, craft and clerical workers and professionals with similar levels of education. For the three least acceptable reasons for abortion, occupation is slightly more important. Differences in the predicted direction between occupational classes in attitudes toward abortion can be seen - particularly among those with less than a high school education. The other occupational levels show the general trend, but it has been reduced by introducing education.

As was the case with income and education, the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and occupation is as we predicted. Individuals with prestige occupations are more likely to approve of abortion than those with less prestige jobs. Rainwater explains similar findings by referring to the varying degrees of investment individuals of different social classes have in the traditional norms and values. This explanation seems to fit here. Higher status individuals (measured by education, income and occupation) are more likely to approve of abortion because they have less to lose if children are increasingly seen as an accessary to, rather than the entire purpose of, marriage.

The negative relationship among the college educated between occupation and attitudes toward abortion, a relationship that was also seen between income and attitudes toward abortion, is also accountable in terms of our theory. Because the college educated are relatively free of the constraining influence of the traditional norms, utilitarian factors have a greater impact on their behavior. For these reasons, it is to be expected that, among college graduates, those with low status jobs and limited incomes will be the most in favor of legalizing abortion.

4.2.4 Size of Place of Residence

Table 4.8 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and size of place of current residence for men and women. The categories used to measure size of place of current residence were the codes used in the NORC surveys - rural, meaning in open country, on a farm or in a small town under 2,500; small city or town, meaning under 50,000; medium size city, meaning 50,000 - 250,000; suburb, meaning near a large city; and large city, meaning over 250,000 inhabitants.

Table 4.8 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by size of place of residence and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972				
	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Sub-urb	Large City
Conditions					
Mother's health					
males	85	84	87	89	88
females	84	80	85	87	88
Defect in fetus					
males	77	77	79	83	80
females	68	71	80	79	81
Rape					
males	71	73	70	85	84
females	72	69	79	84	83
Economic problems					
males	27	46	40	56	59
females	39	34	39	61	53
Unmarried					
males	24	39	34	54	58
females	29	27	37	53	48
Family control					
males	31	39	32	47	52
females	22	25	27	50	47
N					
males	68	181	95	194	135
females	69	185	95	189	137

	1973				
	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Sub-urb	Large City
Conditions					
Mother's health					
males	90	95	94	99	93
females	90	93	86	88	94
Defect in fetus					
males	82	85	84	91	82
females	81	90	85	84	84

Table 4.8 continued

Table 4.3 continued

	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Sub-urb	Large City
Rape					
males	79	86	84	91	82
females	75	83	86	85	84
Economic problems					
males	53	49	65	68	62
females	44	49	51	56	52
Unmarried					
males	46	45	49	71	60
females	41	45	48	53	53
Family control					
males	49	44	59	67	59
females	34	39	42	51	47
N					
males	163	149	82	95	121
females	167	175	94	115	147

We find, in accordance with previous studies (Westoff, 1969; Maxwell, 1970), that individuals (both males and females) who live in or near highly populated areas are more liberal towards legalizing abortion than those living in small towns and rural areas. Although the pattern is apparent for all reasons for abortion, the percentage difference between the attitudes of those living in urban areas and those living in rural areas only becomes of substantial size for the three least acceptable reasons for abortion. Even with these reasons, we find exceptions to the pattern of increasing liberalism towards abortion with increasing urbanization. There are numerous cases, particularly in 1973, where a more populated area is less liberal than a less populated area. It is the case, however, that for all reasons for abortion, individuals from large cities or suburbs are more liberal towards legalizing abortion than individuals from rural areas.

A variable, related to size of place of residence, which may be influencing the initial relationship is education. We know that better educated people tend to live in more urbanized centers while those with less education are concentrated in the rural areas[3]. It may be that it is this relationship between education and size of place of residence that is producing the relationship between residence and attitudes toward abortion. Table 4.9 looks at this. Only the three least acceptable reasons for abortion were considered - it was only for these reasons that we initially found a relationship. All categories of the residence question were retained, but the sex dimension was eliminated as it had not been significant in the initial relationship.

We find that we cannot explain the relationship between size of place of residence and attitudes toward abortion by the confounding influence of education. Within every educational class, those from rural areas are less liberal than those from more urban centers. The relationship is not strictly linear - there are numerous instances where more populated areas are less

Table 4.9 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by size of place of residence and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

1972					
	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Suburb	Large City
Conditions					
Economic problems					
grade school	22	23	24	44	43
high school	49	42	48	58	51
some college	4/12	52	50	69	67
college grad.	2/5	70	10/18	68	86
Unmarried					
grade school	16	17	21	40	46
high school	36	37	41	57	45
some college	5/12	46	50	56	60
college grad.	2/5	60	9/18	66	81
Family control					
grade school	18	18	16	39	38
high school	38	37	31	49	37
some college	3/12	37	47	51	64
college grad.	2/5	60	9/18	60	84
N					
grade school	73	151	76	109	94
high school	47	103	64	125	92
some college	12	65	32	81	42
college grad.	5	47	18	68	43

1973					
	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Suburb	Large City
Conditions					
Economic problems					
grade school	38	34	58	54	44
high school	54	47	45	59	52
some college	61	66	62	65	56
college grad.	70	77	75	74	77

Table 4.9 continued

Table 4.9 continued

	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Sub-urb	Large City
Unmarried					
grade school	31	31	48	56	39
high school	48	41	34	63	51
some college	59	64	52	61	61
college grad.	74	72	71	65	80
Family control					
grade school	29	29	40	46	40
high school	49	40	43	61	45
some college	51	57	55	65	57
college grad.	67	64	71	68	74
N					
grade school	149	115	50	57	72
high school	112	116	56	76	80
some college	39	53	42	46	54
college grad.	27	39	28	31	61

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

liberal than less populated areas - however, a definite trend is apparent. There is some indication, particularly in 1973, of a decline in level of approval for all educational groups but the college graduates between the suburb dwellers and the large city dwellers.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there appears to be a difference between urban and rural dwellers in regards to their commitment to a traditional way of life. The rural dweller tends to live in a closely-knit traditional society, while the urban dweller has, at best, only a tenuous commitment to the traditional social norms. This is reflected in their attitudes toward abortion. For all educational classes, individuals from large cities or suburbs were more liberal toward legalizing abortion than individuals from rural areas. The only anomalous finding was the lower rates of approval of the large city dweller. It may be that there is an optimum level of exposure to liberalizing influences - beyond that, an individual becomes less liberal.

4.3 Summary of Results

In this chapter we looked at the relationship between various demographic variables and attitudes toward abortion. We predicted that those groups which are subject to greater exposure to the traditional values would be less liberal toward legalizing abortion than those whose experiences had reduced the strenth of these norms. By and large, our predictions were confirmed.

Previous studies found a reasonably strong relationship between sex and attitudes toward abortion, with males being more liberal than females. We found that the differences between males and females were slight and not always in the predicted direction. This we accredited to recent changes in the female role.

A maternal, home-making function is no longer the only option available to women and we would predict that as this became increasingly so, the differences between males and females would diminish. In a later chapter, we shall more systematically test this hypothesis.

With respect to age, we found only a slight relationship between it and attitudes toward abortion. We had predicted that the young would be more liberal than the old because they had not yet taken up their future roles and, thus, lacked some of the commitment to the traditional norms that they would develop in later years. This hypothesis received partial support. Among those who had attended college, the group we would expect to be most likely not to have taken up their future roles, the young were more liberal than the old. Among the other two educational categories, though, there seemed to be no relationship between age and attitudes toward abortion.

We had predicted that education would be positively correlated with attitudes toward abortion - that is, the more education an individual had, the more liberal they were towards legalizing abortion - and this prediction was confirmed by the data. We suggested two reasons why education should be related to attitudes toward abortion. First, if education represents exposure to liberalizing influences, then it follows that those with more education will be more liberal than those with less education. The second explanation we put forth drew upon Rainwater (1960). His suggestion was that lower-educated individuals tend to feel ineffective and weak in relation to their world. The one area they have some chance to succeed in, is in "having a family". Because these roles - i.e. motherhood and fatherhood - are so important to them, they are naturally loathe to admit approval of laws which would put children into a planned option category.

Additional support for this second explanation came when we looked at income and occupation. There appeared to be a positive association between both income and occupation that was not entirely reducible to the influence of education. However, the first explanation seems better for two reasons. First, education had a much stronger effect than either income or occupation - the differences due to education were larger and the trends more apparent. Secondly, neither income nor occupational differences were as consistent once education was controlled.

Of all the variables we considered in this chapter, education had the most profound effect on attitudes toward abortion. For this reason, it will be used consistently in future chapters as a control variable. Education also provided the strongest support for our theoretical framework. Among the poorly educated, the group we would hypothesize to be most entrenched in the traditional norms, there was a positive relationship between income and occupation and attitudes toward abortion. Among the college educated though, the group least likely to be responsive to the traditional norms and values, there was a negative relationship. This seemed to offer some support for our theoretical framework. We should point out though, that this support must be qualified on the grounds that (1) the differences are neither strong nor consistently monotonic and (2) the trends are based on a small number of cases. In other words, while the attitudes of college graduates are consistent with a utilitarian model, utilitarian considerations appear, so far, to play no role in the attitudes of the bulk of the respondents, and even in the case of college graduates, the effect of these considerations is weak.

The final variable we considered in connection with attitudes toward abortion was size of place of residence. We predicted that rural dwellers would be less in favor of legalizing abortion than urban dwellers, because rural dwellers are more involved in a traditional way of life. Our prediction was, by and large, confirmed.

For all reasons for abortion, large city or suburb residents were more liberal than rural residents in their attitudes toward abortion.

We are proceeding through this thesis on the assumption that, at least presently, moral norms are predominant in decisions concerning the legalization of abortion. We have made provision, though, to turn to economic considerations if the moral norms do not seem to be adequately explaining the results. On the basis of the findings in this chapter, however, the normative framework seems quite useful. In all cases, findings were interpretable by normative considerations.

Footnotes

1. The reason for the inconclusiveness of the age data, apart from the small magnitude of the differences, is that the trend is broken up in both the 1972 and 1973 surveys by the relatively liberal attitudes of those in the 45-54 age group. Since this finding occurs in both data sets, it is probably not an artifact of the research process. This "bulge" could represent a generational effect or a life cycle effect, or some combination thereof. In any event, its effect, though likely real, is not large enough to interfere with the data analysis and, thus, will not be considered further.

2. Blake uses the term "100 percent effectiveness" when referring to the birth-control pill. We should point out, however, that although the pill is a highly reliable birth prevention technique, it is not 100 percent effective.

3. We find the following relationship between size of place of residence and education:

	1972				
	Rural	Small City	Medium City	Suburb	Large City
% with less than high school	53	41	40	28	35
% college graduates	4	13	9	17	16
N	137	366	190	383	271

	1973 Rural	Small City	Medium City	Suburb	Large City
% with less than high school	46	36	11	27	27
% college graduates	8	12	16	15	23
N	327	323	176	210	267

Generally speaking, as urbanization increases, the percentage of individuals with less than high school education decreases and the percentage of individuals who are college graduates increases.

Chapter 5

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

5.1 Introduction to Analysis

One of the sets of traditional moral norms that the normative theory draws upon are the traditional religious norms of society. As outlined in section 2.3, there is a considerable range of religious beliefs corresponding to the range of religious affiliations. Each religious affiliation has its own views on human life which lead to varying views on birth control and abortion. We predict that an individual's personal views on abortion will correspond to his religious affiliation's views (Lundburg, et al., 1968, p. 203). Thus, we hypothesize, that:

Catholics will be less liberal than non-Catholics (Protestants and Jews), because of the vigorous stand against abortion that the Catholic Church has taken.

Agnostics will be more liberal than any religious group, because of the agnostics' lack of commitment to religious norms.

In addition to religious affiliation, there is the element of religious commitment. There are degrees of commitment to a religion which lead to degrees of acceptance of that religion's beliefs. Religous affiliation becomes important only when the individual has some investment in the ideologies and values associated with that particular religion. We thus hypothesize that:

Within each religious grouping, frequent church attenders will have a greater exposure and investment in the ideologies and values associated with their religion than infrequent church attenders.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Sex and Religion

Table 5.1 shows the differences between Catholic and non-Catholic men and women in their attitudes toward abortion. NORC defined Protestant as any "non-Catholic Christian religion". Catholic included only Roman Catholics. There was another code, "other", but it was deleted from analysis because there were very few cases in the category (23 in 1972 and 26 in 1973) and there was a wide variety of religions covered (from

Table 5.1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by religion and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972		1973	
	males	females	males	females
Conditions				
Mother's health				
Protestant	90	86	94	93
Catholic	78	79	93	85
Jewish	96	96	12/12	100
Agnostic	96	89	98	97
Defect in fetus				
Protestant	84	80	86	88
Catholic	67	66	78	76
Jewish	96	86	12/12	100
Agnostic	94	85	93	93
Rape				
Protestant	80	79	85	84
Catholic	70	71	76	76
Jewish	100	93	12/12	100
Agnostic	87	89	93	93
Economic problems				
Protestant	49	47	61	51
Catholic	36	35	43	35
Jewish	77	75	11/12	93
Agnostic	80	78	80	90
Unmarried				
Protestant	44	40	56	49
Catholic	33	30	38	32
Jewish	81	79	11/12	90
Agnostic	76	70	73	93
Family control				
Protestant	42	35	57	41
Catholic	28	28	37	30
Jewish	65	75	11/12	90
Agnostic	80	70	73	87
N				
Protestant	380	423	365	417
Catholic	208	182	162	207
Jewish	26	28	12	29
Agnostic	46	27	55	31

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

all Eastern Catholic Churches to Moslem, Taoist and Buddhist).

We find that Catholics (both males and females) are indeed the most opposed to the legalization of abortion. The percentage differences between them and the Protestants are generally larger than the differences due to age or sex, and they are consistent over all reasons for abortion. However, the differences between Protestants and Catholics become slight when we compare them with the Jewish rates of approval. The Jews, for all reasons for abortion, are very liberal in their attitudes. A similar result was reported by both Rossi (1967, p. 39) and Westoff, et al., (1969, p. 18). Each found that Jews were by far the most liberal of all religious groups considered on the subject of attitudes toward abortion. Those with no religious affiliation are on a par with the Jewish respondents. Their rates of approval, particularly on the less acceptable reasons for abortion, are very high when compared with the rates of Protestants and Catholics.

The low rates of approval of the Catholics and the slightly higher rates of the Protestants were predicted by the normative theory. Likewise, the high rates of approval of the agnostics were accounted for by the normative theory. It is the high degree of liberalism among the Jews that is somewhat surprising. The Jewish religion takes no stand for or against abortion which would lead us to predict that the Jews would have higher rates of approval than the Catholics but lower rates of approval than the agnostics. It may be that their very high approval rates are a function of their generally higher levels of education or their low rates of church attendance. Both these possibilities will be looked at in subsequent sections. If, in fact, the Jews' high rates of approval are a function of their low church attendance, we may combine the Jews and agnostics to increase the sample size and allow more adequate controls.

5.2.2 Education and Religion

Table 5.2 shows the differences between Protestants, Catholics, Jews and agnostics of different educational levels in their attitudes toward abortion.

When we considered religion by attitudes toward abortion, we found that although the Catholics were the least favorable toward legalizing abortion, the Protestants were not that dissimilar. The Protestants' rates of approval were higher, but when compared to the rates of approval of the Jews and agnostics, the Protestants

Table 5.2 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by religion and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			
	grade school	high school	some college	college grad.
Conditions				
Mother's health				
Protestant	79	93	92	96
Catholic	77	83	80	70
Jewish	10/11	14/15	11/11	17/17
Agnostic	86	18/19	11/12	100
Defect in fetus				
Protestant	73	85	89	93
Catholic	64	67	69	67
Jewish	9/11	12/15	11/11	17/17
Agnostic	86	16/19	11/12	100
Rape				
Protestant	66	87	86	96
Catholic	65	72	80	73
Jewish	11/11	13/15	11/11	17/17
Agnostic	81	15/19	11/12	100
Economic problems				
Protestant	29	56	60	71
Catholic	30	36	46	37
Jewish	5/11	10/15	9/11	17/17
Agnostic	52	15/19	11/12	100
Unmarried				
Protestant	25	50	52	63
Catholic	27	30	37	42
Jewish	6/11	10/15	10/11	17/17
Agnostic	52	14/19	10/12	91
Family control				
Protestant	22	44	48	64
Catholic	29	25	32	30
Jewish	3/11	9/15	9/11	17/17
Agnostic	52	14/19	10/12	91
N				
Protestant	318	243	144	98
Catholic	145	146	59	40
Jewish	11	15	11	17
Agnostic	21	19	12	21

Table 5.2 continued

Table 5.2 continued

	1973			
	grade school	high school	some college	college grad.
Conditions				
Mother's health				
Protestant	89	94	98	97
Catholic	91	86	89	90
Jewish	3/3	12/12	13/13	12/12
Agnostic	16/17	14/15	100	100
Defect in fetus				
Protestant	78	90	94	93
Catholic	75	81	79	68
Jewish	3/3	12/12	13/13	12/12
Agnostic	12/17	14/15	100	100
Rape				
Protestant	73	89	92	95
Catholic	71	76	82	81
Jewish	3/3	12/12	13/13	12/12
Agnostic	13/17	14/15	100	100
Economic problems				
Protestant	42	57	65	77
Catholic	38	36	37	51
Jewish	3/3	10/12	12/13	12/12
Agnostic	10/17	10/15	93	100
Unmarried				
Protestant	40	52	60	78
Catholic	28	37	39	44
Jewish	3/3	11/12	12/13	11/12
Agnostic	9/17	8/15	93	100
Family control				
Protestant	34	51	59	70
Catholic	29	35	34	39
Jewish	3/3	11/12	11/13	12/12
Agnostic	9/17	7/15	90	100
N				
Protestant	287	266	125	102
Catholic	126	139	62	41
Jewish	3	12	13	12
Agnostic	17	15	29	25

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

and Catholics were surprisingly similar. When we introduce education into the analysis, we find that there are large differences between Protestants and Catholics, but only among the more educated respondents. This is because education has a fairly strong liberalizing effect for Protestants, but almost none for Catholics. As a consequence, one finds small differences between Catholics and Protestants with low education and large differences between those with high education.

This difference in the effect of education on the attitudes of Protestants and Catholics has been documented in a number of fertility studies (Blake, 1967; Westoff and Potvin, 1966; Ryder and Westoff, 1971). For both desired and intended family size, an inverse association with education is found only among white non-Catholics. For Catholics, there appears to be no association between intended or desired parity and education. Rossi (1967, p. 40) reports a similar difference between the effect of education on Protestant and Catholic attitudes toward abortion. She accounts for the finding by suggesting that, because large proportions of Catholics receive their education in parochial schools, the longer they attend, the greater the likelihood that they will accept the views of the Church on matters touching their family and personal lives. Although there is evidence that many more Catholics are educated in religious schools than Protestants or Jews (Westoff, et al., 1961, p. 199), we cannot test this interpretation because we do not have data on the nature of the school or college attended.

Hawthorn (1970, p. 100) suggests an explanation that seems more useful. He argues that the Catholic Church does not only proscribe birth control, but it actively prescribes large families. It thus follows that those who have been more exposed to Roman Catholic doctrine are those likely to take its prescriptions more seriously. In the case of Catholics, these are likely to be the more highly educated groups. Our data support the necessary assumption that highly educated Catholics are more apt to be frequent church attenders than lower educated Catholics[1] (our measure of exposure to religious doctrine is frequency of church attendance), thus we can use this explanation to account for our findings. Education does not have the liberalizing effect on Catholics that it does on other religious groups, because the effect of education has been offset by the highly educated Catholics' greater exposure to the Roman Catholic doctrine.

The high approval rates of the Jewish respondents were the other surprising finding when we considered religion by attitudes toward abortion. We suggested then that one reason why the Jews may display such high approval rates is because of their generally higher educational levels. When we control for education, we find that there are not really enough cases to prove or disprove this. In 1972, there were 11 Jews with less than a high school education and only 3 of the 11 approved of abortion in the case of the mother not wanting any more children. This suggests that some part of the high liberalism of the Jews is due to high educational levels, however, in 1973 there were only 3 Jews with less than a high school education and all of them approved of abortion for all reasons. The extent to which the high approval rates of the Jews are a function of their religion or a function of their generally high educational levels will have to remain in question.

5.2.3 Church Attendance: Education, Religion and Sex

When we looked at the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and education, religion and sex, we were neglecting the fact that all these independent variables are related to church attendance. Previous literature, supported by the marginal distributions of our data[2], indicates that Catholics at every educational level are more apt to attend religious services than non-Catholics, and that women are greater church attenders than men. We thus looked at our relationships controlling for church attendance. Table 5.3 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion, education and church attendance; Table 5.4 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion, religion and church attendance; and Table 5.5 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion, sex and church attendance. In all cases, church attendance was measured by the categories high, medium and low. High church attendance was operationalized as attending religious services "nearly every week" or more; medium church attendance ranged from attending "several times a month" to "several times a year"; and low church attendance covered those who attended "several times a year" to never. These specific cutpoints were arrived at by taking the entire range of responses and then choosing those specific points that maximized differences between categories but still retained some theoretical significance.

We see from Table 5.3 that church attendance contributes just as strongly as educational level in determining attitudes toward abortion. Within every

Table 5.3 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by frequency of church attendance and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	church attendance			church attendance		
	low	medium	high	low	medium	high
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	92	83	65	94	92	83
high school	97	94	82	95	97	84
some college	95	89	84	100	100	86
college grad.	98	95	82	100	100	90
Defect in fetus						
grade school	83	73	60	78	81	72
high school	90	79	69	94	94	77
some college	93	84	79	95	97	78
college grad.	97	95	75	97	98	75
Rape						
grade school	79	69	55	79	78	61
high school	91	88	70	92	92	75
some college	95	83	80	100	93	78
college grad.	100	96	80	99	98	82
Economic problems						
grade school	41	29	25	51	52	24
high school	66	51	38	66	62	34
some college	84	63	41	81	71	32
college grad.	88	77	49	92	85	53
Unmarried						
grade school	46	20	19	44	47	22
high school	60	43	34	60	58	31
some college	79	54	35	81	64	32
college grad.	85	71	43	91	81	53
Family control						
grade school	39	22	18	46	41	14
high school	53	42	29	63	55	30
some college	75	53	27	82	61	25
college grad.	86	73	35	89	77	46
N						
grade school	158	138	204	176	118	145
high school	134	115	178	137	125	176
some college	57	76	97	85	75	73
college grad.	59	56	65	65	52	68

educational level, those who attend religious services frequently are decidedly more opposed to abortion than those who attend seldom or never. This would be expected under the terms of the normative theory. Both education and religion are contributing factors, thus one would expect to find that the least liberal views are held by high church-attending, low educated people and the most liberal views are held by low church-attending, high educated people. It should also be pointed out that the effect of a given variable is strongest among respondents who are on the extreme "liberal" position of the other variable. That is, education has the greatest impact among the low church-attenders, while church attendance has the greatest impact among the educated.

When we consider the effect of church attendance for different religions (Table 5.4), we find that some of the difference between the Protestants and Catholics can be attributed to differences between these two groups in frequency of church attendance. There are no attitudinal differences between Protestants and Catholics who attend church several times a month or less. The difference between the two groups comes in at the level of the frequent church-goers. Among these people, Protestants are more liberal than Catholics[3]. This suggests that religion and church attendance interact in

Table 5.4 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by religion and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish
Conditions						
Mother's health						
low attendance	94	97	100	96	95	100
medium attend.	89	90	92	96	95	17/17
high attendance	81	70	3/3	88	81	3/3
Defect in fetus						
low attendance	89	89	88	88	85	100
medium attend.	80	76	92	91	87	17/17
high attendance	77	57	3/3	82	67	3/3
Rape						
low attendance	87	89	96	88	88	95
medium attend.	79	83	96	89	84	17/17
high attendance	73	62	3/3	77	65	3/3
Economic problems						
low attendance	57	57	76	64	52	95
medium attend.	45	49	77	64	56	16/17
high attendance	42	25	2/3	40	22	2/3
Unmarried						
low attendance	57	55	80	59	48	90
medium attend.	37	37	77	60	50	16/17
high attendance	34	23	3/3	39	20	2/3
Family control						
low attendance	49	52	72	59	52	91
medium attend.	38	38	69	56	46	16/17
high attendance	30	19	2/3	33	16	2/3
N						
low attendance	251	62	25	251	96	21
medium attend.	258	89	26	250	93	12
high attendance	262	237	3	274	180	3

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

determining attitudes of individuals. For the beliefs of a religion to influence a person's attitudes, that person must be exposed to and have some investment in that religion. It is to be expected that those who attend religious services the most frequently are the ones most apt to accept the views of their Church. Since the Catholic Church takes the most vocal stand against abortion, it is understandable that Catholics who attend services frequently will be most opposed to abortion and that Catholics who attend seldom or never will hold similar opinions to individuals of other religions who attend seldom or never.

In a previous section we suggested that the overall high approval rates of the Jewish respondents might be a function of their low church attendance rates. Although we are hampered by the small sample sizes, it appears that controlling for church attendance does not affect the high Jewish rates of approval. Compared to the other religious groups, the Jews are very liberal towards legalizing abortion regardless of frequency of church attendance.

Although we found only slight differences between men and women when we considered sex by attitudes toward abortion, we decided to look at this relationship controlling for church attendance because we know that women tend to go to church more than men. As seen in

Table 5.5 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by sex and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972		1973	
	males	females	males	females
Conditions				
Mother's health				
low attendance	97	96	96	94
medium attendance	98	94	89	89
high attendance	86	84	76	76
Defect in fetus				
low attendance	88	90	90	87
medium attendance	93	89	81	79
high attendance	71	78	68	68
Rape				
low attendance	88	91	87	90
medium attendance	91	86	82	81
high attendance	72	73	65	69
Economic problems				
low attendance	67	66	60	64
medium attendance	70	57	49	50
high attendance	34	33	36	34
Unmarried				
low attendance	61	63	61	60
medium attendance	64	54	42	40
high attendance	32	31	30	29
Family control				
low attendance	67	60	56	54
medium attendance	62	49	44	39
high attendance	30	24	25	25
N				
low attendance	246	218	232	176
medium attendance	176	196	206	180
high attendance	184	279	230	314

Table 5.5, when we control for church attendance, even the slight differences between men and women disappear. For the different levels of church attendance, there are no differences in the attitudes of the two sexes.

5.2.4 Church Attendance, Education and Religion

Table 5.6 shows the relationship between education, church attendance and attitudes toward abortion for Protestants and Catholics separately. Previously, we found that religious preference interacted with education and with frequency of church attendance, both of which are important correlates of attitudes toward abortion. What we intend to do in this section is see whether the additive effects of education and church attendance are the same for the two religious groups. Because we were simultaneously controlling for two variables, individual cell sizes were quite small. To circumvent this problem, we pooled the 1972 and 1973 data sets. We felt this step was justified because the patterns of relationship we had previously seen were the same for the two years.

We find that, for Protestants, frequency of church attendance and level of education both influence attitudes toward abortion. As level of education increases and frequency of church attendance decreases, the percentage of those who approve of legalizing abortion increases. For Catholics, on the other hand, frequency of church attendance seems to be the major factor influencing attitudes toward abortion. The differences in approval

Table 5.6 Attitudes of white Protestant and Catholic Americans toward abortion by education and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data an average of 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	Protestants			Catholics		
	church attendance			church attendance		
	low	medium	high	low	medium	high
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	93	87	72	94	89	74
high school	96	95	90	98	97	76
some college	97	96	91	95	92	76
college grad.	100	96	95	14/15	14/14	71
Defect in fetus						
grade school	80	76	70	84	77	57
high school	94	87	82	92	85	65
some college	96	94	86	82	81	68
college grad.	98	94	89	13/15	14/14	54
Rape						
grade school	77	72	59	83	75	56
high school	93	89	82	90	92	64
some college	97	89	83	95	84	74
college grad.	100	96	92	15/15	14/14	63
Economic problems						
grade school	42	37	27	49	45	20
high school	68	55	48	50	58	24
some college	82	71	41	68	49	27
college grad.	90	73	66	10/15	12/14	27
Unmarried						
grade school	42	31	23	42	34	16
high school	60	50	42	52	47	23
some college	79	62	35	64	40	27
college grad.	88	68	63	10/15	12/14	25
Family control						
grade school	37	29	18	48	37	14
high school	58	47	39	48	47	19
some college	79	61	29	64	40	18
college grad.	86	70	53	10/15	8/14	19
N						
grade school	216	176	209	69	71	131
high school	170	160	176	52	59	172
some college	67	100	101	22	37	62
college grad.	49	71	79	15	14	52

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

of abortion of different educational classes are slight.

If we compare the approval rates of Protestants and Catholics of similar education and similar church attendance rates, we find that the differences between the two groups are limited to the frequent church-attenders who have at least some college education. It is among this group that the Protestants are clearly more liberal than the Catholics. For example, if we compare high church-attending, college graduates, we find that Protestants are an average of 33 percentage points more liberal than Catholics over all reasons for abortion.

We can account for these findings by referring back to the section on education and religion. We showed there that it is only among Catholics that the highly educated are likely to be the frequent church-attenders. This has the effect of making the highly educated Catholics more opposed to abortion than we would expect. The fact that the differences between religious groupings are limited to the frequent church-attenders was also accounted for previously. It is only possible for the beliefs of a religion to influence a person's attitudes if that person has some exposure to and investment in a religion. Differences between individuals who attend religious services infrequently or never would not be expected.

5.3 Summary of Results

We will conclude this chapter by summarizing our results and reviewing how well they were predicted by the normative theory. The initial finding was that religious affiliation does influence attitudes toward abortion in the hypothesized way. Catholics are least liberal toward abortion and agnostics are most liberal. The only anomolous finding was the very high Jewish rates of approval. We tested to see if their high education levels or low church attendance rates were producing the finding. It appeared that their high approval rates were a function of their religion (i.e. the Jewish subculture) rather than their education or church attendance. This interpretation would have to be qualified, though, because the small number of cases eliminated the possibility of controlling simultaneously for education and frequency of church attendance and because of the error introduced in using frequency of church attendance as a measure of religious commitment.

When we looked at the relationship between religious affiliation and attitudes toward abortion controlling for education, we found that education has a liberalizing effect on Protestants but not Catholics. Because of this differential effect of education, one finds small differences between Catholics and Protestants with low education and large differences between those with high education. Rossi (1967) found a similar result in her data; she accounted for it by the fact that, because large proportions of Catholics receive their education in parochial schools, the longer they attend, the greater the chance they will accept the views of the Church. We could not test this explanation with our data and, instead, used the fact that highly educated Catholics are more apt to be frequent church-attenders than lower educated Catholics to explain the findings. Education does not have the liberalizing effect on Catholics that it does on other religious groups, because the effect of education has been offset by the highly educated Catholic's greater exposure to the Roman Catholic doctrine, either through higher church attendance (Hawthorn's explanation) or through the nature and length of their schooling (Rossi's explanation).

We found that frequency of church attendance strongly influenced the respondent's attitudes toward abortion in a way predicted by the normative theory. Within every educational category and for every religious affiliation (there was doubt about the Jews, however total cell frequencies were very small), those who attended religious services frequently were more opposed to abortion than those who attended seldom or never.

In fact, we found that differences between religious affiliations were apparent only among the frequent church-attenders. This would be the logical extension to our hypotheses - differences between religious groups can only be apparent among the frequent church-attenders because it is only these individuals who have some investment in the norms of their church.

In sum, it appears that the normative theory can quite adequately explain attitudes toward abortion using the traditional religious norms of society. Education and frequency of church attendance seem to have a substantial impact on the attitudes toward abortion of Protestants. For Catholics, though, frequency of church attendance seems to be the major variable. Education has a minimal influence, but only among those who attend religious services infrequently or never.

Footnotes

1. We find the following relationship between education and frequency of church attendance for Protestants and Catholics. The percentages are based on a pooling of the 1972 and 1973 data sets.

   Protestants

	% low attenders	N	% medium attenders	N	% high attenders	N
less than high school education	36%	216	29%	176	35%	209
college grad.	25%	49	36%	71	39%	79

   Catholics

	% low attenders	N	% medium attenders	N	% high attenders	N
less than high school education	26%	69	26%	71	48%	131
college grad.	18%	15	17%	14	65%	52

   In support of our theoretical explanation, we see that 65 percent of Catholic college graduates are high church attenders as against 48 percent of the grade school educated. Among Protestants, this relationship between education and church attendance is not apparent.

2. Rossi (1967, pages 41 and 44) reported that "Better-educated people are more apt to attend religious services than poorly educated people", "Catholics at every educational level are more apt to be frequent church attenders" and "Women are considerably more likely to be frequent church attenders than men are, ...". Our data support her findings

that Catholics and women are more frequent church attenders than non-Catholics and men, but we do not find evidence of better educated people being more apt to attend religious services. Our data are as follows:

	1972		1973	
	% frequent church attenders	N	% frequent church attenders	N
Religious Affiliation				
Protestant	36	262	35	274
Catholic	61	237	49	180
Jewish	6	3	7	3
Sex				
Males	30	184	34	230
Females	40	279	47	314
Education				
Grade school	41	204	33	145
High school	42	178	40	176
Some college	42	97	31	73
College grad.	36	65	37	68

3. This statement needs to be qualified. Certainly in 1972, and for the three most acceptable reasons in 1973, we find that religion interacts with church attendance in determining attitudes toward abortion. For the three least acceptable reasons in 1973, however, an attitudinal difference is apparent between low church attending Protestants and Catholics. In each case, though, the spread in attitudes is greater between those who are high church attenders.

Chapter 6

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY VARIABLES

6.1 Introduction to Analysis

Throughout the thesis, we have been hypothesizing that an individual's attitudes toward abortion can be explained by referring to the traditional norms and values that he or she is responsive to. In Chapter 5, we considered the set of traditional religious norms. In this chapter, we shall look at the set of traditional marriage and family norms. As discussed in section 2.3, it is normatively required of virtually everyone in society to marry and have children at relatively young ages (Reiss, 1971, pp. 192-194; Levy, 1972, p. 23). Those who go against these norms - either by not marrying or by not having a family - are frequently reminded by their family and friends of their "abnormal" behavior[1].

In this chapter, we shall look at the relationship between various indicators of these marriage and family values and attitudes toward abortion. We shall be making our predictions along the lines suggested by the normative framework. More specifically, we expect:

1. Individuals who are, or have been married, to be less liberal toward legalizing abortion than individuals who have never been married. Waller and Hill (1968, p. 151) point out the differences between the married and the never married in regards to investment in the traditional marriage and family norms:

> "In our culture, marriage involves an identification with the moral order of society. The young, unmarried adult is likely to toy with certain ideas concerning sex freedom, but after marriage he is almost certain to return to conventional standards. One line of explanation is that he now has a stake in the moral order."

Since NORC sampled only adults, we would expect the majority to be, or to have been, married. Those that have never been married have shown, through virtue of not being married, less investment and commitment to the traditional norms. It is on these grounds that we would predict them to be more liberal toward abortion.

2. The more children an individual has, expects or considers ideal, the less liberal he or she will be toward legalizing abortion. The traditional norms of American society stress fecundity within marriage, however, within these broad norms, there is quite a range of individual fertility. Hoffman and Wyatt (1960)

and Davis and Blake (1956) outline various factors that are associated with preference for a large or small family. We have hypothesized lower approval rates of legalizing abortion among the individuals who expect large families because they tend to see themselves in terms of their parental roles. For example:

> " ... women who see themselves as oriented either to their husbands or to outside interests do not want as large families as women who think of themselves mainly in terms of interest in children and homemaking ... "
>
> (Rainwater, 1968, p. 300)

This greater investment in the parental role is the reason why we are predicting the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and family size.

3. The greater the number of siblings an individual has, the less liberal he or she will be toward legalizing abortion. There is a definite family-size relationship running through generations, so that children who come from large families tend to have large families (Berent, 1953). Maxwell (1970, p. 251) uses this finding to hypothesis why individuals from larger families are more conservative in their attitudes toward abortion than those from smaller families:

> "The prominence of children in the family may be a matter of family tradition. ... a general

> sense of responsibility toward children appears to be carried over into attitudes toward abortion. The only child appears to feel less obligation to an unborn child than one who has several siblings."

We would add to Maxwell's explanation that coming from a large family is an indication of strong exposure to traditional family values. This also would lead us to predict a relationship between number of siblings an individual has and attitudes toward abortion.

4. Individuals who oppose a married woman working outside the home to be less liberal toward legalizing abortion than individuals who approve. Traditionally, the place for married women has been in the home taking care of their husbands and children (Reiss, 1971, p. 55, 237). In recent years the proportion of wives and mothers who have gone to work has increased markedly, but often at the price of their feeling slightly guilty[2]. We predict that individuals who do not approve of a married woman working outside the home will be more opposed to legalizing abortion because they have indicated a greater acceptance of the traditional norms by their attitude to working women.

Although we predict that attitudes toward a woman working will be related to attitudes toward abortion, we are less sure of the impact of a woman's employment on her attitudes toward abortion. Numerous studies considering working mothers have come to the conclusion that there is very little difference between women who work and women who do not (Yarrow, 1962; Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Nye and Hoffman, 1963). Yarrow (1962), for example, found that the two groups of mothers (working and nonworking) did not differ in their definition of the accepted female role in marriage. If this in fact is the case, then we would predict no differences between the attitudes of working and nonworking mothers. On the other hand, it seems that there should be a difference in attitudes between working and nonworking wives because of the traditional norm against married women working. We will not hypothesize a relationship here, but will consider the effect of a woman's work status on her attitudes toward abortion.

6.2 Findings

6.2.1 Marital Status

Table 6.1 shows the relationship between marital status and attitudes toward abortion for men and women. The question asked of respondents in the NORC surveys

Table 6.1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by marital status and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

1972

	Married	Never Married	Widow	Divo-rced	Separ-ated
Conditions					
Mother's health					
males	87	88	15/18	14/18	3/5
females	85	90	75	93	11/14
Defect in fetus					
males	80	79	14/18	13/18	3/5
females	77	81	63	93	9/14
Rape					
males	79	78	12/18	11/18	3/5
females	77	89	70	90	9/14
Economic problems					
males	47	58	9/18	7/18	3/5
females	48	54	32	63	3/14
Unmarried					
males	42	58	7/18	11/18	3/5
females	39	54	32	60	5/14
Family control					
males	38	61	8/18	9/18	2/5
females	36	44	27	60	4/14
N					
males	537	95	18	18	5
females	464	72	95	30	14

1973

	Married	Never Married	Widow	Divo-rced	Separ-ated
Conditions					
Mother's health					
males	94	95	86	95	11/12
females	90	92	95	90	9/10
Defect in fetus					
males	83	86	82	91	11/12
females	86	86	84	74	8/10

Table 6.1 continued

Table 6.1 continued

	Married	Never Married	Widow	Divo-rced	Separ-ated
Rape					
males	82	89	82	77	12/12
females	82	84	83	74	7/10
Economic problems					
males	55	68	45	59	11/12
females	49	59	42	48	7/10
Unmarried					
males	51	60	41	64	9/12
females	47	59	41	55	5/10
Family control					
males	52	59	41	59	11/12
females	41	55	32	45	6/10
N					
males	450	104	22	22	12
females	509	64	84	31	10

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

was "Are you currently married, widowed, divorced, separated or have you never been married?".

We find that, for both men and women, the presently married are less liberal in their attitudes than those who have never been married. This relationship is not particularly strong. In fact, for the three most acceptable reasons, the differences between those who are presently married and those who have never been married are insignificant; it is for the three least acceptable reasons that the differences between the two groups appear.

The widowed respondents (both males and females) show the lowest rates of approval. Again, the differences between them and the other marital status groups increases as the reasons for abortion become less acceptable. They are very much like the presently married and never married in their attitudes toward abortion in the cases of mother's health, defect in fetus and rape, but they become significantly less liberal than either of these groups for the three less acceptable reasons.

It is difficult to ascertain a pattern in the responses of the divorced and separated respondents, between or within the years 1972 and 1973. The sample sizes are small and no clear patterns for either the males or the females emerge in either year. Because of the small number of cases involved and the lack of any stable pattern, these two groups were not considered in further analysis.

We had hypothesized that married individuals would be less liberal than single individuals because "being married" was an indication of commitment to the traditional norms. There seems to be only partial support for this hypothesis. Differences in the predicted direction were apparent only for the three less acceptable reasons and, even here, they were relatively small. It may be that marital status is not all that good an indicator of commitment to traditional norms. Until relatively recently, virtually everyone married, regardless of their commitment to the traditional norms. Or, possibly, an age factor may be influencing the results. In Chapter 4, we had hypothesized that the old had a greater investment in the traditional norms and values than the young, because the young were at a stage where they had not yet taken up their future, adult roles. It may be that marital status is important in determining attitudes toward abortion only among the young. The older respondents, regardless of their marital status, have a commitment to the traditional norms. Among the young, though, because marital status is a measure of "acceptance of a future adult role", it should be related to attitudes toward abortion.

Table 6.2 tests this hypothesis by considering the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and marital status controlling for age. Although we are hindered by the small number of respondents over 30 who have never been married, it seems that there is support for this idea. There appears to be a difference between the attitudes of married and single individuals only among those under 30. Older individuals have similar attitudes toward abortion regardless of their marital status.

Table 6.2 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by age and marital status. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	under 30	30-49	50+	under 30	30-49	50+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
married	91	86	84	94	92	89
never married	95	12/14	71	96	100	15/19
Defect in fetus						
married	82	81	75	86	87	80
never married	83	11/14	69	89	83	14/19
Rape						
married	79	77	79	83	84	80
never married	85	12/14	74	90	83	14/19
Economic problems						
married	48	48	47	55	53	50
never married	64	7/14	31	70	61	8/19
Unmarried						
married	39	41	41	51	49	47
never married	61	10/14	34	63	56	8/19
Family control						
married	36	37	38	54	47	42
never married	59	9/14	31	62	52	7/19
N						
married	193	433	373	195	406	356
never married	118	14	35	125	23	19

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

In previous chapters, we have seen that education, religion and church attendance are significant variables in determining attitudes toward abortion. We therefore considered the relationship between marital status and attitudes toward abortion controlling for these variables. Males and females were combined to get a larger total sample size on the grounds that they displayed similar patterns when we looked at the initial relationship.

Table 6.3 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion, marital status and education[3]. We see that it is only among those who have been to college that the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and marital status holds. Among the grade-school and high-school educated there are only insignificant differences between the presently married, the never married and the widowed.

The normative theory could account for this finding by considering the effect of education. Because the grade-school and high-school educated have not experienced the liberalizing influence of education, all will have the same investment in the traditional family values and norms regardless of marital status. There will be a uniform belief in the traditional values no matter whether an individual is married, single or widowed. It is for the college educated, where the educational experiences have had a liberalizing influence, that there will be differing investments in the traditional norms depending upon marital status.

Religion and church attendance were also held constant in the relationship between attitudes toward

Table 6.3 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by marital status and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	married	never married	widow	married	never married	widow
Conditions						
Economic problems						
grade school	32	26	30	42	46	34
high school	52	40	36	50	54	60
some college	55	82	50	59	74	4/10
college grad.	69	78	0/1	73	88	6/10
Unmarried						
grade school	26	31	28	37	41	32
high school	45	43	32	47	50	60
some college	46	77	45	56	68	4/10
college grad.	63	76	1/1	72	81	6/10
Family control						
grade school	23	41	30	34	41	25
high school	40	32	28	46	48	55
some college	43	71	35	56	62	3/10
college grad.	61	76	0/1	66	81	6/10
N						
grade school	373	39	67	308	37	65
high school	334	47	25	352	46	20
some college	161	44	20	158	53	10
college grad.	132	37	1	137	32	10

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

abortion and marital status. These tables can be found in the Appendix - Tables A1 and A2. In neither case did the control variable affect the initial relationship. In every religious group, those who have never been married are more liberal than those who are presently married, while the widowed are the least liberal of all. The same holds true for church attendance. The never marrieds are the most liberal, the widowed the least liberal and the presently married intermediate, regardless of frequency of church attendance. Among the wido weds in 1973 we find an interesting change in the effect of church attendance. Rather than attitudes toward abortion and church attendance being linearly related, we find that medium church-attenders are more liberal in their attitudes than infrequent church-attenders. This pattern is not evident among the widowed in 1972, however it is consistent over all reasons for abortion in 1973.

6.2.2 Family Size - Actual, Ideal and Expected

Table 6.4 presents the relationship between number of children ever had and attitudes toward abortion for males and females. The question asked of all respondents (including the never marrieds) in the NORC surveys was "How many children have you ever had? Please count all that were born alive at any time (including any you had from a previous marriage)". The wording of the question was such that the responses it generated were not a measure of present family size - a fact that was kept in mind in the analysis of the results.

Table 6.4 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by number of children ever had and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	Number of Children			Number of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
males	89	85	78	93	94	94
females	89	82	70	91	93	83
Defect in fetus						
males	81	80	67	86	80	81
females	81	71	64	86	87	75
Rape						
males	80	78	67	85	81	77
females	84	73	60	84	86	67
Economic problems						
males	55	44	29	61	54	40
females	53	40	33	54	49	32
Unmarried						
males	51	37	33	56	51	27
females	46	34	29	52	47	29
Family control						
males	49	36	25	59	48	31
females	42	30	28	47	40	23
N						
males	401	199	69	405	154	48
females	395	191	87	414	200	83

The category cutpoints for this variable - none to two children, three or four children, and five or more children - were determined by looking at the entire range of responses and then cutting at natural breaks.

We find that the more children an individual has had, the less liberal that person is towards legalizing abortion. Although there is evidence of this pattern for all reasons for abortion, it becomes particularly pronounced for the three least acceptable conditions. Sex is not a significant variable in the relationship. Both males and females display a similar pattern between number of children ever had and attitudes toward abortion. The reasoning that was used to predict the relationship between family size and attitudes toward abortion seems to adequately explain the results. The person who has had five or more children will be more opposed to legalizing abortion than the person who has no children because they have a greater investment in family values and norms.

When the relationship between number of children ever had and attitudes toward abortion is looked at controlling for education, religion and church attendance, we find that none of these control variables significantly change the initial relationship. There are still differences between the various categories of the control variable but, above this, there is the effect of number of children ever had. These tables can be found in the Appendix - Tables A3, A4 and A5.

The 1972 NORC survey asked its respondents what they felt was the "ideal" number of children[4]. Table 6.5 shows the relationship between this variable and attitudes toward abortion for males and females. We find that the greater the number of children a respondent says is ideal, the less liberal that person is towards

Table 6.5 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by ideal number of children and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Ideal Family Size		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions			
Mother's health			
males	93	83	84
females	90	83	74
Defect in fetus			
males	88	76	66
females	86	74	56
Rape			
males	84	75	69
females	88	74	59
Economic problems			
males	61	38	30
females	58	43	26
Unmarried			
males	57	33	34
females	55	33	20
Family control			
males	55	30	27
females	50	30	19
N			
males	322	266	64
females	283	297	69

legalizing abortion. This is not surprising when we consider the strong relationship between number of children ever had and ideal family size[5]. The normative explanation that was used to account for the relationship between number of children ever had and attitudes toward abortion can also be used here. It is the individuals who claim large family sizes as ideal that have the greatest adherence to the traditional norms and values of parenthood and thus the greatest abhorance towards legalizing abortion.

Table 6.6 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and number of children ever had controlling for ideal family size. We see that both variables - number of children ever had and ideal family size - influence attitudes. Those who have had less than three children, and see the ideal family as comprised of less than three children, are most liberal towards legalizing abortion. Those who have had five or more children, and see the ideal family as having five or more children, are least liberal.

The differences due to variations in ideal family size are larger than the differences due to variations in number of children ever had. This is to be expected. We are hypothesizing that stated ideal family size and number of children ever had are related to attitudes toward abortion in the way that they are because both are indicators of investment in family values and norms. Of the two, however, ideal family size has greater face validity. Respondents with less than three children consist of both those who want less than three children and those who want more children but have not yet reached this ideal. According to our theoretical framework, this latter group has a higher investment in family values and norms. By

Table 6.6 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by ideal number of children and number of children ever had. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Number of Children Had		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions			
Mother's health			
0,1,2 ideal	94	91	75
3,4 ideal	85	82	77
5+ ideal	82	77	76
Defect in fetus			
0,1,2 ideal	88	87	75
3,4 ideal	76	74	70
5+ ideal	68	54	57
Rape			
0,1,2 ideal	89	83	69
3,4 ideal	75	74	72
5+ ideal	71	69	53
Economic problems			
0,1,2 ideal	62	61	39
3,4 ideal	46	37	38
5+ ideal	37	23	20
Unmarried			
0,1,2 ideal	58	55	42
3,4 ideal	36	28	38
5+ ideal	36	27	18
Family control			
0,1,2 ideal	54	50	42
3,4 ideal	35	27	27
5+ ideal	25	27	18
N			
0,1,2 ideal	462	105	36
3,4 ideal	248	251	60
5+ ideal	56	26	51

measuring their present family size, we are introducing a source of error in our measure which is not present in the question on ideal family size.

When the relationship between ideal family size and attitudes toward abortion is looked at controlling for the variables shown to be important before (education, religion and church attendance), we find again that none significantly change the initial relationship. The effects of both the control variables and ideal number of children are apparent in the tables. Tables of these relationships can be found in the Appendix - Tables A6, A7 and A8.

In connection with expected family size, Westoff reported (1969, pp. 23-24) that when women were classified according to whether they said they had all the children they wanted, the more favorable attitudes toward abortion appeared among those who did not want any more children. The 1972 NORC survey asked its respondents "Do you expect to have any (more) children?". This question is not exactly synonymous with Westoff's question[6], but it is similar enough to expect comparable results. Table 6.7 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and expectation of more children for men and women. We find that there are not particularly large differences between those who expect more children and those who do not. Furthermore, the differences that are apparent are not in the hypothesized direction. It is those individuals who expect (more) children who have the slightly more favorable attitudes.

Table 6.7 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by expectation of (more) children and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Expects More Children?	
	Yes	No
Conditions		
Mother's health		
males	91	89
females	92	86
Defect in fetus		
males	80	82
females	84	79
Rape		
males	79	83
females	84	79
Economic problems		
males	54	48
females	52	50
Unmarried		
males	48	45
females	47	43
Family control		
males	48	40
females	44	38
N		
males	149	362
females	93	374

We controlled for whether the respondent presently has children or not, on the grounds that this variable might be affecting the relationship between expectation of children and attitudes toward abortion. Table 6.8 presents this relationship. We find even less evidence of a relationship between attitudes toward abortion and expectation of children. There are virtually no differences between those who expect (more) children and those who do not. The normative theory would predict

Table 6.8 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by expectation of (more) children and presence of children. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Expects More Children? Yes	No
Conditions		
Mother's health		
no children	95	82
children	87	88
Defect in fetus		
no children	86	84
children	77	80
Rape		
no children	83	90
children	78	80
Economic problems		
no children	59	58
children	45	48
Unmarried		
no children	55	54
children	40	43
Family control		
no children	53	52
children	38	38
N		
no children	134	50
children	108	686

that those people who have no children and expect no children would have the highest approval rates. This is not borne out by our data. Their rates are higher than the rates of individuals with children, but there is very little difference between their rates and the rates of individuals who do not presently have children but expect to have children.

It is difficult to know how to interpret these results. If we look at the data we see that the differences are between individuals with children and individuals without children - expectation of (more) children is not influencing attitudes toward abortion. It may be that expectation of (more) children is a poor indicator of the traditional norms and values. To have found the predicted relationship between expectation of (more) children and attitudes toward abortion, we probably would have had to control for the stage each individual was at in the family-formation process.

Our theoretical framework is set up in such a way that we can turn to economic considerations if normative factors do not seem to be explaining results. In this case, though, the economic framework would not fare any better than the normative one. Economic considerations would predict a difference between those who do not want any (more) children and those that do. The people who have had all the children they want should be more favorable towards abortion, because there is a possibility that they may have to resort to it to ensure not having any (more) children. The people still wanting children should be less liberal - a pregnancy would be less upsetting to them. This, of course, is not what the data indicate. It seems best to stay with the normative framework. The negative findings we found when we used expectation of (more) children to measure commitment to the traditional norms were probably due to its being a poor indicator.

6.2.3 Number of Siblings

In a 1970 study of college students' attitudes toward abortion, Maxwell found that respondents from families of four or more children were most conservative, those from families of two or three children were more liberal, and those subjects who were an only child were the most liberal of all in attitudes toward abortion. Both the 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys asked their respondents how many siblings they had, so we looked at this variable in connection with attitudes toward abortion. We used the cutpoints that Maxwell did, but divided the category of "4 or more children" into "4, 5 or 6 children in family" and "more than 6 children in family". This was done because there were sufficient cases and preliminary analysis indicated that such a break was warranted.

Table 6.9 shows the relationship between number of siblings and attitudes toward abortion for men and women. We find that number of siblings does influence attitudes toward abortion. Those people with more than

Table 6.9 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by respondent's number of siblings and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972		1973	
	males	females	males	females
Conditions				
Mother's health				
no siblings	86	85	97	93
1, 2 siblings	89	86	94	93
3 to 5 siblings	88	87	95	91
5+ siblings	82	80	91	88
Defect in fetus				
no siblings	86	82	97	91
1, 2 siblings	86	82	86	87
3 to 5 siblings	77	77	85	85
5+ siblings	72	69	78	82
Rape				
no siblings	83	85	97	91
1, 2 siblings	83	81	88	87
3 to 5 siblings	78	82	87	83
5+ siblings	70	69	73	75
Economic problems				
no siblings	56	49	64	59
1, 2 siblings	60	57	67	61
3 to 5 siblings	46	43	56	48
5+ siblings	34	38	49	36
Unmarried				
no siblings	50	46	70	50
1, 2 siblings	56	50	58	59
3 to 5 siblings	43	36	54	48
5+ siblings	30	34	42	34
Family control				
no siblings	42	41	64	54
1, 2 siblings	52	46	62	54
3 to 5 siblings	40	33	52	41
5+ siblings	31	29	46	26
N				
no siblings	52	39	33	44
1, 2 siblings	229	211	201	231
3 to 5 siblings	221	223	207	217
5+ siblings	169	198	168	205

five brothers or sisters are most opposed to legalizing abortion, while those people with only one or two siblings are least opposed. Maxwell found that respondents who were only children were the most liberal of all categories. Evidence of this is not apparent in our table. There is little difference between the attitudes of those with no siblings and those with one or two siblings - if any pattern is apparent, it is for those with no siblings to be slightly less liberal than those with one or two siblings. Sex does not influence the relationship. There is a similar pattern between attitudes toward abortion and number of siblings for men and women.

As reported in the introduction to this chapter, Maxwell accounted for the more conservative attitudes of the individuals from large families on the grounds that prominence of children in a family may be a matter of family tradition. There is a definite family-size relationship running through generations, so that people from large families have large families and people from small families have small families. Maxwell argues that this "general sense of responsibility toward children" is carried over toward abortion. The individual who has several siblings feels a greater obligation to have children than those with few siblings. We added to his argument that coming from a large family was an indication of strong exposure to traditional family values. The major difference in Maxwell's data set was between only children and those with one or two siblings. Our data support his explanation, however, for us, the major differences were between those with few siblings, those with some siblings and those with many siblings.

Knowing that religion and education are related to number of siblings, we looked at the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and number of siblings holding each constant. We find that neither of the control variables significantly change the initial relationship. Although the effect of number of siblings is weak to begin with, and is lessened somewhat, there are still differences between the various categories of the control variables. Tables of these relationships can be found in the Appendix - Tables A9 and A10.

6.2.4 The Working Woman

The 1972 NORC survey asked its respondents about their attitudes toward a woman working. The question was worded "Do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?". Table 6.10 shows the relationship between this variable and atti-

Table 6.10 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward a woman working and sex. Percent who feel abortion should be legal under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Males		Females	
	Married Woman Working?			
	approve	disapprove	approve	disapprove
Conditions				
Mother's health	89	84	88	76
Defect in fetus	82	76	81	66
Rape	82	72	82	69
Economic problems	56	37	53	33
Unmarried	52	34	50	30
Family control	50	30	42	26
N	408	254	438	219

tudes toward abortion for men and women. We find that there are moderate differences for both men and women between those who approve of a woman working and those, who do not. As predicted, those who approve of a woman working are more liberal in their attitudes than those who disapprove.

When we control for education (Table 6.11), we find that this difference in abortion attitudes between those who approve of a woman working and those who disapprove occurs only among those with a high school or college education. Individuals with less than a high school education do not show this relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward a woman working. This is similar to what we observed

Table 6.11 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward a woman working and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	grade school	high school	some college	college graduate
Conditions				
Mother's health				
approve*	80	92	91	90
disapprove	77	83	80	100
Defect in fetus				
approve	74	80	86	89
disapprove	67	73	77	89
Rape				
approve	67	85	89	90
disapprove	67	72	72	100
Economic problems				
approve	34	55	64	74
disapprove	29	39	47	54
Unmarried				
approve	30	49	56	68
disapprove	26	36	39	54
Family control				
approve	29	44	52	68
disapprove	24	29	35	46
N				
approve	225	295	178	148
disapprove	261	132	51	28

* Codes are to the question of approval of a married woman working.

in connection with marital status - that is, the differences between categories become significant only among those with some advanced education. The normative explanation that was suggested there applies here. Individuals with less than high school education are uniformly opposed to legalizing abortion. It is only when the liberalizing effect of education is introduced that differences between those who approve of a woman working and those who do not become apparent.

The relationship between attitudes toward a woman working and attitudes toward abortion was also looked at controlling for religion and frequency of church attendance. Neither of these variables significantly changed the initial relationship. There were the expected differences between the categories of the control variables and between the categories of attitudes toward a woman working. These two tables can be found in the Appendix - Tables A11 and A12.

We had predicted that individuals who opposed married women working would be more opposed to legalizing abortion than individuals who did not approve, because they had indicated a greater acceptance of the traditional norms by their attitude to working women. This prediction was confirmed for the majority of the sample. We were less sure of the impact of a woman's employment on her attitudes toward abortion. It seemed logical to assume that there would be a difference in attitudes between working and nonworking mothers because of the traditional norms against working. Nevertheless, previous studies (particularly Yarrow, 1962) had found no differences between working and nonworking wives in their definition of the accepted female role in marriage.

Table 6.12 Attitudes of white American married women toward abortion by employment status. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	working		house keeping	working		house keeping
	full time	part time		full time	part time	
Conditions						
Mother's health	88	83	86	94	91	88
Defect in fetus	79	72	78	89	90	83
Rape	80	78	77	85	80	82
Economic problems	49	50	48	49	63	46
Unmarried	41	50	37	48	56	43
Family control	38	37	36	39	54	39
N	81	46	321	127	70	299

Tables 6.12 and 6.13 show, respectively, the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and working status of respondent and the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and working status of respondent controlling for presence of children for white, married women. There were various codes for the variable "working status of respondent"; we used only "working full-time", "working part-time" and "keeping house". We can see from the tables that there is very little difference between the attitudes of women who work and women who do not work. Even when we consider if they have children or not, we find only small differences between the groups. To the extent that there is any trend, it is the women who work

Table 6.13 Attitudes of white American married women toward abortion by employment status and presence of children. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	working		house keeping	working		house keeping
	full time	part time		full time	part time	
Conditions						
Mother's health						
no children	6/7	3/3	89	93	5/5	84
children	88	83	86	95	91	88
Defect in fetus						
no children	5/7	3/3	76	86	5/5	79
children	80	71	78	90	89	84
Rape						
no children	6/7	3/3	76	71	4/5	76
children	80	79	77	89	80	83
Economic problems						
no children	4/7	3/3	59	50	5/5	58
children	49	48	47	48	60	44
Unmarried						
no children	3/7	3/3	35	43	3/5	50
children	40	48	38	49	55	42
Family control						
no children	3/7	3/3	51	50	4/5	50
children	38	33	34	36	52	37
N						
no children	7	3	37	28	5	38
children	74	42	284	99	65	261

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

part-time who are most liberal.

This supports Yarrow's findings which play down the impact of employment on the mother role. It appears, from her data and supported by our data, that working and nonworking mothers have similar ideas concerning the accepted female role in marriage. Yarrow proceeded more deeply into her analysis by comparing working and nonworking mothers within the subcategories of those satisfied and those not satisfied with their present roles. She found that, among those satisfied, women did equally well at their mother role whether or not they were working. But among those mothers who were dissatisfied, the mother who remained at home did a poorer job as a mother than the mother who went out to work. Because the NORC surveys asked their respondents how satisfied they were with the work that they did, we looked at this variable in connection with working mothers.

The 1972 survey asked only respondents who were currently employed how satisfied they were with the work that they did. The 1973 survey asked the question of those who were currently employed or keeping house. Table 6.14 shows the relationship between this variable and attitudes toward abortion for white married women. We find a slight indication of the relationship that Yarrow found. Those mothers who were satisfied with the work that they did were as equally likely to approve of legalizing abortion whether they were or were not working. But among those who were only moderately satisfied, the women who were working were slightly

Table 6.14 Attitudes of white American married women toward abortion by employment status and satisfaction with job. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972		1973		
	working		working		house keeping
	full time	part time	full time	part time	
Conditions					
Mother's health					
very satisfied*	89	84	96	90	90
moderately sat.	86	15/18	93	93	85
Defect in fetus					
very satisfied	85	72	93	90	83
moderately sat.	71	14/18	84	89	86
Rape					
very satisfied	78	76	86	83	85
moderately sat.	83	15/18	84	76	78
Economic problems					
very satisfied	46	48	45	57	47
moderately sat.	54	9/18	53	69	43
Unmarried					
very satisfied	43	60	43	52	46
moderately sat.	37	7/18	54	62	37
Family control					
very satisfied	37	44	38	50	40
moderately sat.	40	6/18	40	62	35
N					
very satisfied	46	25	69	40	120
moderately sat.	35	18	57	29	106

* Codes of "satisfaction with job" variable.

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

more liberal toward legalizing abortion than the women who remained at home. Yarrow accounts for the attitudes of dissatisfied nonworking mothers by suggesting that they are staying home out of a sense of duty and not from desire. This could also account for our findings. The slightly lower approval rates of the dissatisfied nonworking wife could be a reflection of the fact that she is staying home because she feels a sense of obligation to do so.

From the data in this section, it appears that, although attitudes toward a woman working are related to attitudes toward abortion, the actual fact of a woman working is not. Although it seems logical to assume that there would be a difference in attitudes toward abortion between working and nonworking mothers because of traditional family norms, our negative findings are in accord with what previous studies have found. This suggests to us that women may be working because they have to - i.e. for financial reasons - and, therefore, this variable may be a poor measure of commitment to traditional norms. We would need data on why women were working, and whether they felt free to quit at any time, to test this hypothesis.

6.3 Summary of Findings

In this chapter, we have been testing our theoretical framework of attitudes toward abortion by seeing the extent to which the conventional norms surrounding marriage and the family could account for individuals' attitudes toward abortion. We have compared the attitudes of groups with varying degrees of commitment and investment in the traditional norms. Our findings have been largely as we had predicted them.

Marital status was related to attitudes toward abortion in a way predicted by the theory. Among the college educated, those who were married were less liberal than those who had never been married. We suggested that the grade school and high school educated did not show this relationship between marital status and attitudes toward abortion because they all believed in the traditional values - the liberalizing effect of education had not introduced its influence.

Actual and ideal family size were related to attitudes toward abortion in a way compatible with normative considerations. As the number of children a respondent had or felt was ideal increased, the less liberal that person became toward legalizing abortion. Expectation of (more) children did not work. There were no differences between the attitudes of individuals with no children who were not planning to have any children and the attitudes of individuals with no children but who were expecting children. Both groups were, however, more liberal than individuals with children.

Number of siblings correlated with attitudes toward abortion in a way predicted by our theory. Assuming that number of siblings is a measure of "exposure to traditional values" or "a general sense of responsibility toward children", the finding that those people from large families are more opposed to abortion than those from small families was to be expected.

Attitudes toward a woman working were related to attitudes toward abortion in a way compatible with normative considerations, that is, those against a woman working were those against legalizing abortion. The fact of a woman working, however, was not. This finding seemed surprising considering the traditional norms against mothers working, but previous studies had suggested that there are no differences between how working and nonworking mothers define the accepted female role in marriage. It appears that orientation to traditional family values and norms predict attitudes toward abortion, whereas involvement in traditional family structures does not.

Footnotes

1. Numerous articles, in both scientific journals and popular magazines (i.e. Redbook, Good Housekeeping), point out the pressures that are put upon people to marry and have children. Blake (1968, p. 16), for example, says:

   > "Not only are individuals under strong institutional pressure to marry and start a family, but the decision to do so, even in the face of financial difficulties, receives widespread moral (and, if necessary, tangible) encouragement."

2. We were unable to locate any research considering the effect working has on the guilt feelings of mothers. However, from conversations with mothers who work and from various articles and letters in such women's magazines as Redbook and McCalls, it seems to us that women who work do feel guilty and have to justify their working (i.e. "It doesn't really harm the children."; "I'm home before they are."; "They have an excellent babysitter.").

3. Because the differences between the presently married, the never married, and the widowed were insignificant for the conditions mother's health, defect in fetus, and rape, the table considers only economic problems, woman not married, and abortion as a method of family control. This will also be the case when we control for religion and church attendance.

4. The "ideal number of children" question was not asked in 1973. There is also no information on expectation of more children.

5. The Pearson correlation between ideal family size and number of children ever had was .3324, which was significant at the .001 level. (N= 1295)

6. A distinction is made in the literature between "expect" and "want" in connection with family size. For white Americans, however, this distinction is relatively minor.

Chapter 7

ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX

7.1 Introduction to Analysis

The final set of traditional moral norms that the normative theory draws upon are the traditional sexual norms of society. A relationship between attitudes toward abortion and general underlying attitudes toward sex has been pointed out by Rossi (1967), Maxwell (1970) and Westoff (1969). Their contention is that, deeply buried beneath the discussion of abortion, there are unresolved attitudes toward sex. Support for this position is readily found in various anti-abortion "letters to the editor". One letter, written into the Edmonton Journal, illustrates this point nicely:

> "I will tell you in this letter that abortion and birth control are only excuses to indulge in vile sex practices and have sex relations out of the bond of marriage; in short, an excuse to have the so called pleasure without the responsibility thereafter, mainly to love a child and bring it up in honor."
>
> Edmonton Journal, May 11, 1974

In this chapter, we shall test out this notion. We shall see to what extent attitudes toward abortion are an extension of attitudes toward sexual practices which are traditionally defined as illegitimate. As mentioned in section 2.3, we shall use three measures of a general attitude toward sex: attitudes toward premarital sex, attitudes toward extramarital sex and attitudes toward homosexuality.

7.2 Findings

7.2.1 Attitudes toward Premarital Sex

In her 1967 article, Alice Rossi looked at the relationship between attitudes toward premarital sex and attitudes toward abortion. She found that restrictive attitudes on premarital sex bore a strong relationship to opposition to legal abortion for every abortion condition specified. Moreover, she found that the relationship differed by sex. There were no differences between men and women among those with restrictive views toward premarital sex, but among those with permissive attitudes, men were much more inclined than women to support the idea of legalizing abortion.

Table 7.1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward pre-marital sex and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Pre-marital Sex Always Wrong	 Almost Wrong	 Sometimes Wrong	 Not Wrong
Conditions				
Mother's health				
males	77	89	92	94
females	75	84	94	95
Defect in fetus				
males	65	86	86	88
females	63	78	86	88
Rape				
males	67	80	84	85
females	66	79	89	90
Economic problems				
males	30	40	57	64
females	29	42	62	71
Unmarried				
males	26	33	52	63
females	24	37	57	65
Family control				
males	22	34	49	62
females	20	30	51	64
N				
males	214	80	166	191
females	293	81	160	103

Table 7.1 shows the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex for men and women. Data were available only for 1972; the 1973 NORC survey did not include a question on attitudes toward premarital sex. (They did, however, consider attitudes toward other types of illegitimate sex which we shall consider shortly.) The codes we used were the codes initially used by NORC - premarital

sex relations are "always wrong", "almost always wrong", "wrong only sometimes" and "not wrong at all". We find that attitudes toward premarital sex bear a decided relationship on attitudes toward abortion. Those individuals who are against legalizing abortion are those individuals opposed to premarital sex. We do not see evidence of the interaction by sex. There are no differences between men and women among those with restrictive views or among those with permissive views. This is in line with our previous findings. Throughout the study we have not witnessed sex differences - differences other studies have seen - and we have put this down to the changing female role.

When we control for education (Table 7.2), we find that both education and attitudes toward premarital sex influence attitudes toward abortion. For this table, and all other tables using control variables, attitudes toward premarital sex was recoded into three categories - the "almost always wrong" and the "wrong only sometimes" codes were collapsed. For all reasons for abortion, there are sizable differences between the attitudes of individuals from different educational classes and between the attitudes of individuals with differing views toward premarital sex. We find some evidence of the usual interaction in which the effect of education is weak in the case of those respondents

Table 7.2 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward pre-marital sex, education and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	MALES			FEMALES		
	Pre-marital Sex			Pre-marital Sex		
	Always Wrong	Sometimes	Not Wrong	Always Wrong	Sometimes	Not Wrong
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	69	88	89	69	85	93
high school	89	90	98	79	92	97
some college	76	91	95	84	91	95
college grad.	81	95	95	9/12	100	95
Defect in fetus						
grade school	60	76	82	61	78	90
high school	66	84	89	65	84	90
some college	72	91	92	70	87	91
college grad.	71	96	92	6/12	100	95
Rape						
grade school	58	71	76	57	78	80
high school	79	77	85	74	86	93
some college	66	91	92	74	87	91
college grad.	71	96	95	10/12	100	100
Economic problems						
grade school	21	28	48	22	41	60
high school	37	49	71	35	55	64
some college	38	64	69	39	63	76
college grad.	38	74	76	5/12	79	91
Unmarried						
grade school	16	28	47	18	34	57
high school	39	34	71	26	55	55
some college	31	56	69	35	50	71
college grad.	33	71	74	5/12	69	86
Family control						
grade school	15	29	45	14	31	57
high school	29	38	67	24	43	52
some college	24	49	69	26	50	67
college grad.	29	67	74	3/12	72	91
N						
grade school	101	75	62	143	68	30
high school	62	61	52	95	112	31
some college	29	55	39	43	32	21
college grad.	21	55	38	12	29	21

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

on the conservative end of the control variable - in this case, among respondents who feel premarital sex is always wrong. However, for respondents who feel premarital sex is only sometimes wrong or not wrong, it appears that both variables are important in determining attitudes toward abortion.

We find a sex difference in this relationship. It is not, however, in the direction specified by Rossi. For the three most acceptable reasons for abortion - mother's health, defect in fetus, and rape - the attitudes of the males and females are similar. It is for the three least acceptable reasons that differences appear. For college graduates and individuals with less than a high school education, we find that among those with permissive views toward premarital sex, females are more liberal (by an average of 13 percentage points) than males. Among those with more restrictive views on premarital sex, there are no differences between males and females. For individuals who have been to college but have not graduated, there are no differences between the attitudes of males and females in any category of attitudes toward premarital sex. For those with a high school education, among those with permissive views toward premarital sex, males are more liberal (by an average of 13 percentage points) than females.

For high school graduates with more restrictive views on premarital sex, the attitudes of the males and females are similar.

In sum, we observed that there were no differences in attitudes between men and women for the health reasons for abortion or among those with restrictive views toward premarital sex for the "birth-control" reasons for abortion. However, among those with permissive attitudes toward premarital sex and for the birth-control reasons, a sex difference appears. For college graduates and individuals with less than a high school education, females are more liberal than males. For high school graduates, males are more liberal than females. For those who have some college but have not graduated, the male and female attitudes are the same. Normative considerations would predict that males would be more liberal than females in attitudes toward abortion regardless of attitudes toward premarital sex. It can account for the lack of a sex difference on the grounds that the normative structure, which gives women one role and men another, is changing. It cannot account for the finding that among those with less than a high school education and among college graduates with permissive views, females are more liberal than males. By not having the 1973 data set to check our findings against, we can not tell whether this is a trend that needs to be explained or a random fluctuation specific to that year. We have other measures of sexuality that we will be looking at in connection with education. We shall reserve any explanations until we have more information.

Our next step is to look at attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex controlling for religion and sex. Table 7.3 presents these results. In this table, "Jewish" and "Agnostic" were combined into a single category. We felt this was warranted on the basis of the similarity between these two groups in attitudes toward premarital sex[1]. For Protestant and Catholic males, we find that both religion and attitudes toward premarital sex affect attitudes toward abortion. For the Jewish/Agnostic group, however, the effect of attitudes toward premarital sex on attitudes toward abortion seems slight. There are not really enough cases, though, to come to a firm conclusion. It is the case, nevertheless, that for every abortion condition and for every category of attitudes toward premarital sex, the Protestants are more liberal than the Catholics and the Jewish/Agnostics are the most liberal of all.

For females, we find a different relationship between attitudes toward abortion, attitudes toward

Table 7.3 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward pre-marital sex, religion and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	MALES			FEMALES		
	Pre-marital Sex			Pre-marital Sex		
	Always Wrong	Sometimes	Not Wrong	Always Wrong	Sometimes	Not Wrong
Conditions						
Mother's health						
Protestant	82	94	95	77	95	93
Catholic	68	84	85	72	79	97
Jew/Agnostic	3/4	16/18	100	6/9	16/16	96
Defect in fetus						
Protestant	75	91	86	69	90	91
Catholic	48	76	80	49	74	90
Jew/Agnostic	3/4	16/18	98	6/9	13/16	93
Rape						
Protestant	72	83	87	69	90	82
Catholic	56	81	74	59	73	97
Jew/Agnostic	4/4	16/18	92	7/9	14/16	96
Economic problems						
Protestant	32	54	63	32	60	61
Catholic	23	39	48	16	39	70
Jew/Agnostic	3/4	15/18	79	6/9	11/16	85
Unmarried						
Protestant	29	46	60	24	57	52
Catholic	19	34	52	21	30	60
Jew/Agnostic	3/4	14/18	77	4/9	11/16	89
Family control						
Protestant	25	46	60	21	48	50
Catholic	14	32	48	13	27	63
Jew/Agnostic	3/4	14/18	75	4/9	11/16	85
N						
Protestant	134	140	93	203	154	44
Catholic	73	82	46	75	66	30
Jew/Agnostic	4	18	48	9	16	27

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

premarital sex and religion. Protestant females who feel premarital sex is only sometimes wrong are as liberal towards legalizing abortion as those who believe premarital sex is never wrong. Among females of the other two religious groups, we see the standard increase in liberal attitudes toward abortion between those who believe premarital sex is always wrong and those who believe it is never wrong. The result of the Protestant females' failure to show the standard increases in liberalism is that, although they are more liberal than Catholic women at the levels of feeling premarital sex is always wrong and only sometimes wrong, among those who feel premarital sex is not wrong, Catholic women are more liberal (by an average of 15 percentage points) than Protestant women. This seems to suggest that Protestant women see premarital sex in absolute terms - it is wrong or it is right. Distinguishing between those who answer "sometimes wrong" and those who answer "not wrong" contributes little in accounting for the attitudes toward abortion of Protestant females.

Our final control variable in the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex is church attendance. Unlike Rossi, we find that church attendance is related to attitudes toward premarital sex[2], thus we need to control for it to determine its effect on the initial relationship. Table 7.4 presents the results. We find that both church attendance and attitudes toward premarital sex affect attitudes toward abortion. Particularly for the three least acceptable abortion conditions, there are differences between the three church attendance categories and differences between the premarital sex categories. The only place where attitudes toward premarital sex seem to have little effect is among the irreligious in the case of the acceptable reasons for abortion.

By and large, sex is insignificant in the relationship; in most cases the same pattern is apparent for males and females and the absolute percents are similar in all cells. The one instance of interaction is in the attitudes of women who approve of premarital sex. It appears that frequency of church attendance may have no effect on the attitudes of permissive women toward the less acceptable reasons for abortion, however we are hampered in coming to a firm conclusion by the small number of high church-attending women who feel premarital sex is not wrong.

We are interested in determining in this chapter whether or not a general "attitude toward illegitimate

Table 7.4 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward pre-marital sex, church attendance and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	MALES			FEMALES		
	Pre-marital Sex			Pre-marital Sex		
	Always Wrong	Sometimes	Not Wrong	Always Wrong	Some times	Not Wrong
Conditions						
Mother's health						
low attendance	98	96	96	86	99	94
medium attend.	77	92	95	78	95	97
high attendance	70	84	77	71	83	16/17
Defect in fetus						
low attendance	91	92	89	82	89	89
medium attend.	60	86	89	63	86	94
high attendance	58	79	77	58	81	16/17
Rape						
low attendance	90	90	85	80	96	89
medium attend.	73	84	86	66	87	88
high attend.	56	74	82	62	77	17/17
Economic problems						
low attendance	45	62	65	50	66	75
medium attend.	23	52	66	32	56	68
high attendance	27	41	54	23	46	11/17
Unmarried						
low attendance	40	60	72	34	70	71
medium attend.	17	46	55	19	48	62
high attendance	25	31	45	23	36	9/17
Family control						
low attendance	33	57	66	32	60	67
medium attend.	25	45	58	18	45	62
high attendance	17	31	50	17	32	10/17
N						
low attendance	42	77	102	44	74	52
medium attend.	52	87	64	68	62	34
high attendance	120	81	22	180	104	17

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

sex" is related to attitudes toward abortion. From the data presented in connection with attitudes toward premarital sex, we believe we can conclude that it does. There appears to be some underlying attitude toward sex that, independent of religion, education or church attendance, affects attitudes toward abortion. We were only able to use the 1972 data - the 1973 survey did not include a question on attitudes toward premarital sex - but the differences were large enough and strong enough to suggest that a general attitude toward illegitimate sex is fairly important in determining attitudes toward abortion.

The 1973 NORC survey did include a number of questions tapping other aspects of sexuality, thus we will now turn to them and see if they too influence attitudes toward abortion independently of other variables.

7.2.2 Attitudes toward Infidelity

The 1973 NORC survey asked a number of questions that can be seen as indicators of a general attitude toward sex. The first one we shall look at is attitudes toward infidelity. The question asked of respondents was: "There has been a lot of talk about how morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country.

What is your opinion about a married person having sexual relations with someone other than the marriage partner - is it always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?" In our initial analysis, the codes "almost always wrong" and "wrong only sometimes" were collapsed because of the relatively small number of people who answered anything but "always wrong". Table 7.5 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward infidelity for men and women. We find a similar pattern between these two attitudinal questions as was found between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex. For both males and females, it is those people who are liberal towards infidelity who are liberal towards legalizing abortion. Among those with restrictive views toward extramarital sex, females seem slightly less liberal than males (7 percentage points over the three least acceptable reasons) but any sex difference disappears among the permissive.

The relationship was then looked at controlling for (one at a time) education, religion and church attendance to insure it was not the relationship of one of these variables with attitudes toward infidelity that was producing the initial finding. Attitudes toward infidelity were recoded into two categories -

Table 7.5 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward infidelity and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	Extra-marital Sex		
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Not Wrong
Conditions			
Mother's health			
males	91	99	97
females	89	97	11/11
Defect in fetus			
males	79	93	94
females	81	95	11/11
Rape			
males	78	94	100
females	79	92	10/11
Economic problems			
males	47	74	88
females	41	73	11/11
Unmarried			
males	44	66	84
females	39	70	10/11
Family control			
males	43	72	81
females	32	70	10/11
N			
males	389	180	32
females	520	165	11

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

"always wrong" and "some question". This was done because the majority of the respondents felt extra-marital sex was always wrong and to get any reasonable size comparison group, it was necessary to combine all other responses. Undoubtedly, the range of the positive and negative feeling was reduced, but this was the price we felt we had to pay to get workable sample sizes.

Table 7.6 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward extramarital sex controlling for education and sex. We find, as was the case with attitudes toward premarital sex, that education and attitudes toward infidelity both affect attitudes toward abortion. When we were looking at attitudes toward premarital sex and attitudes toward abortion controlling for education and sex, we found interaction between education and sex. Evidence of a similar relationship in this table is not apparent. For the health reasons for abortion, female college graduates with restrictive views toward infidelity are more liberal (by an average of 16 percentage points) in regards to abortion than the corresponding male group. Other than this, the attitudes of the males and females are similar. For the birth-control reasons for abortion, men seem slightly more liberal than women. There are exceptions, however the differences are small.

Table 7.7 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward infidelity controlling for religion and sex. Again we find differences due both to religion and attitudes toward extramarital sex. Jews and agnostics (both males and females) are more liberal than Protestants who are more liberal than Catholics, while those who feel extramarital sex need

Table 7.6 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward infidelity, education and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Infidelity		Infidelity	
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Always Wrong	Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
grade school	87	98	88	94
high school	95	96	86	97
some college	95	100	92	97
college grad.	88	100	100	100
Defect in fetus				
grade school	72	84	76	91
high school	87	96	83	94
some college	87	98	84	97
college grad.	76	92	94	100
Rape				
grade school	66	84	73	84
high school	86	98	79	95
some college	92	98	88	84
college grad.	80	98	97	100
Economic problems				
grade school	42	63	35	47
high school	45	73	41	79
some college	52	82	45	76
college grad.	63	86	64	90
Unmarried				
grade school	36	51	34	44
high school	39	67	39	75
some college	55	74	44	73
college grad.	63	82	61	90
Family control				
grade school	36	61	24	44
high school	43	69	34	78
some college	48	80	38	68
college grad.	58	82	47	90
N				
grade school	157	51	198	32
high school	112	49	211	67
some college	60	61	73	37
college grad.	59	51	36	39

Table 7.7 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward infidelity, religion and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Infidelity		Infidelity	
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Always Wrong	Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
Protestant	92	97	91	98
Catholic	89	100	82	94
Jew/Agnostic	18/19	100	95	100
Defect in fetus				
Protestant	83	92	85	98
Catholic	72	88	73	87
Jew/Agnostic	15/19	100	90	100
Rape				
Protestant	81	96	81	91
Catholic	69	88	73	87
Jew/Agnostic	16/19	100	90	97
Economic problems				
Protestant	53	78	44	76
Catholic	32	61	30	54
Jew/Agnostic	11/19	91	81	97
Unmarried				
Protestant	50	70	43	71
Catholic	29	53	25	57
Jew/Agnostic	9/19	85	90	92
Family control				
Protestant	49	76	34	69
Catholic	26	58	22	59
Jew/Agnostic	9/19	85	76	92
N				
Protestant	257	102	329	86
Catholic	105	57	161	46
Jew/Agnostic	19	47	21	39

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

not always be wrong are more liberal towards abortion than those who feel it is always wrong. When we were looking at attitudes toward premarital sex and attitudes toward abortion controlling for religion and sex, we saw that Catholic women were more liberal than Protestant women among those with permissive views toward premarital sex. Evidence of this is not apparent when we look at attitudes toward infidelity. By collapsing attitudes toward infidelity into two categories, we may have eliminated the possibility of finding such a result, however, there are so few Catholic women who feel extramarital sex is "not wrong" that to revert back to the three categories would be pointless.

Table 7.8 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward infidelity by church attendance and sex. Both attitudes toward infidelity and church attendance seem to affect attitudes toward abortion, however, some interesting interactions also appear. For women, all church attendance categories show relatively the same percentage increase in liberal attitudes toward abortion between those who feel infidelity is always wrong and those who feel there is some question about it. For men, on the other hand, there is some indication that for those who are medium church attenders, attitudes toward infidelity

Table 7.8 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward infidelity, church attendance and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES Infidelity		FEMALES Infidelity	
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Always Wrong	Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
low attendance	94	99	93	100
medium attend.	98	97	93	98
high attendance	83	100	83	92
Defect in fetus				
low attendance	82	95	83	100
medium attend.	95	91	86	98
high attendance	67	90	77	85
Rape				
low attendance	78	98	87	97
medium attend.	91	91	84	92
high attendance	68	90	71	82
Economic problems				
low attendance	53	83	52	86
medium attend.	64	80	50	78
high attendance	31	48	30	50
Unmarried				
low attendance	46	78	49	83
medium attend.	62	66	48	73
high attendance	30	45	29	47
Family control				
low attendance	52	83	45	81
medium attend.	55	73	40	73
high attendance	27	42	20	50
N				
low attendance	125	116	130	86
medium attend.	111	64	147	49
high attendance	152	31	239	40

are not that important in determining attitudes toward abortion. That is, there is not much difference in attitudes toward abortion between medium church-attending men who feel extramarital sex is always wrong and those who feel that there is some question. Looking at the table the other way, we see that among men with restrictive views on infidelity, the medium church attenders are sizeably more liberal (an average of 10 percentage points over all reasons) than the low church attenders. It is this in fact which is reducing the difference in liberal attitudes toward abortion between the medium church attending men who feel extramarital sex is always wrong and those who feel that there is some question. Women do not show this high abortion approval rate among those who feel extramarital sex is always wrong and thus show the standard, and expected, increases between the two categories of the extramarital question. Why men who are medium church attenders and hold restrictive views toward extramarital sex show such high rates of approval of abortion is a puzzle. The pattern was not evident when we looked at attitudes toward premarital sex. It may be a function of the data set or it may be that for medium church attending men, attitudes toward infidelity are not related to attitudes toward abortion.

7.2.3 Attitudes toward Homosexuality

The second question tapping a general attitude toward sex from the 1973 NORC survey that we shall look at has to do with attitudes toward homosexuality. The question asked was: "What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex - do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?". As was the case when we were looking at attitudes toward infidelity, the codes "almost always wrong" and "wrong only sometimes" were collapsed. Table 7.9 presents the results. We find a similar pattern between these two attitudinal questions as was found in regards to the previous attitudinal questions. For both men and women, those who are liberal toward homosexuality are those who are liberal toward legalizing abortion. For the three least acceptable reasons for abortion, men of both permissive and restrictive leanings are more liberal than women. The spread in attitudes though, between the percent who feel homosexuality is always wrong and the percent who feel it is never wrong, is the same for males and females.

Our next step is to look at the relationship controlling for education. Table 7.10 presents the results. As was the case with infidelity, the codes "always wrong" and "some question" were combined. Again, there are so few people who feel homosexuality is

Table 7.9 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward homosexuality and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	Homosexuality		
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Not Wrong
Conditions			
Mother's health			
males	91	99	100
females	88	97	99
Defect in fetus			
males	81	93	93
females	82	91	93
Rape			
males	79	95	94
females	78	94	95
Economic problems			
males	48	74	89
females	39	77	76
Unmarried			
males	43	74	82
females	37	73	75
Family control			
males	43	75	85
females	31	67	75
N			
males	418	87	72
females	477	95	76

anything but always wrong, that we felt it necessary to combine all other responses. We find, for females, that both education and attitudes toward homosexuality influence attitudes toward abortion. In the case of males, though, the relationship is very weak; it disappears in fact in the case of men who feel homosexuality is all right.

Table 7.10 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward homosexuality, education and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES Homosexuality		FEMALES Homosexuality	
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Always Wrong	Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
grade school	89	19/19	89	95
high school	94	100	86	95
some college	95	100	89	100
college grad.	87	98	100	100
Defect in fetus				
grade school	74	17/19	76	90
high school	89	92	85	87
some college	86	100	86	96
college grad.	77	89	100	95
Rape				
grade school	69	16/19	74	90
high school	88	94	78	93
some college	91	100	86	91
college grad.	79	94	96	100
Economic problems				
grade school	45	15/19	34	60
high school	46	75	41	73
some college	52	85	42	79
college grad.	64	82	64	86
Unmarried				
grade school	38	13/19	34	35
high school	42	67	38	73
some college	48	85	36	79
college grad.	60	82	60	86
Family control				
grade school	39	14/19	25	40
high school	42	78	35	72
some college	50	83	33	72
college grad.	57	80	52	82
N				
grade school	186	19	196	20
high school	121	36	198	60
some college	64	48	55	47
college grad.	47	55	25	44

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

We saw, when looking at the other indicators of a general orientation toward sexuality, an interaction by sex. The same pattern that was evident in the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward infidelity is apparent here. For the health reasons for abortion, female college graduates with restrictive views toward homosexuality are more liberal (by an average of 18 percentage points) in regards to abortion than the corresponding male group. Other than this, the attitudes of the males and females are similar. For the birth-control reasons for abortion, men of all educational groups with restrictive attitudes toward homosexuality are more liberal toward legalizing abortion than women. Among those with permissive views, the attitudes toward abortion are the same for males and females.

Table 7.11 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward homosexuality controlling for religion and sex. We find that both religion and attitudes toward homosexuality affect attitudes toward abortion. The pattern we expect to find between religion and attitudes toward abortion (Jews and agnostics more liberal than Protestants who are more liberal than Catholics) is apparent for females with both permissive and restrictive views toward

Table 7.11 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward homosexuality, religion and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES Homosexuality		FEMALES Homosexuality	
	Always Wrong	Some Question	Always Wrong	Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
Protestant	92	100	91	99
Catholic	91	97	82	94
Jewish/Agnostic	95	100	95	100
Defect in fetus				
Protestant	83	96	85	96
Catholic	76	79	77	79
Jewish/Agnostic	80	100	90	100
Rape				
Protestant	82	99	81	95
Catholic	73	82	71	88
Jewish/Agnostic	85	100	86	100
Economic problems				
Protestant	55	84	42	80
Catholic	34	61	25	61
Jewish/Agnostic	55	93	86	94
Unmarried				
Protestant	50	78	40	80
Catholic	30	59	26	48
Jewish/Agnostic	35	93	76	100
Family control				
Protestant	50	84	33	73
Catholic	28	81	22	52
Jewish/Agnostic	45	88	71	97
N				
Protestant	275	74	306	82
Catholic	117	39	142	52
Jewish/Agnostic	20	42	21	33

homosexuality. For males, however, the Jewish-Agnostic rate of approval of abortion is very similar to the Protestant rate. Catholic men show the expected lower rate of approval. An interaction by sex was found when we looked at attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward premarital sex. It was not evident when we looked at attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward infidelity and it is not apparent here. Catholic women are less liberal than Protestant women for all reasons for abortion and for both those who are permissive and those who are restrictive in their attitudes toward homosexuality.

Table 7.12 presents the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and attitudes toward homosexuality controlling for church attendance and sex. We find, as was the case with the previous indicators of sexuality, that both church attendance and attitudes toward homosexuality affect attitudes toward abortion. When we looked at attitudes toward abortion by attitudes toward infidelity, we found that for male medium church attenders, attitudes toward infidelity were unimportant in determining attitudes toward abortion. This was because the male medium church attenders were more liberal toward abortion than the male low church attenders. In the case of attitudes toward homosexuality, we find that for all church attendance categories, and for both men and women, there is an increase in percent who approve of legalizing abortion between those who feel homosexuality is always wrong and those who feel there

Table 7.12 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward homosexuality, church attendance and sex. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1973 NORC survey.

	MALES Homosexuality Always Wrong	 Some Question	FEMALES Homosexuality Always Wrong	 Some Question
Conditions				
Mother's health				
low attendance	94	100	95	97
medium attend.	97	100	93	100
high attendance	84	96	82	95
Defect in fetus				
low attendance	83	98	87	95
medium attend.	92	96	85	96
high attendance	70	71	78	82
Rape				
low attendance	82	98	86	99
medium attend.	89	96	86	89
high attendance	69	83	69	91
Economic problems				
low attendance	54	90	50	86
medium attend.	63	83	51	74
high attendance	32	46	26	64
Unmarried				
low attendance	45	87	49	82
medium attend.	59	74	46	77
high attendance	29	50	25	57
Family control				
low attendance	53	90	44	81
medium attend.	53	78	42	70
high attendance	27	46	19	54
N				
low attendance	145	88	119	79
medium attend.	116	46	135	47
high attendance	155	24	220	44

is some question about its wrongness. The male medium church attenders with restrictive views toward abortion show the unexpected high rates of approval of abortion, but the rates of those with permissive views are still higher.

7.3 Summary of Results

Our purpose in this chapter was to see to what extent attitudes toward abortion were an extension of a general, underlying attitude toward sex. Previous studies, supported by numerous anti-abortion letters-to-the-editor, had suggested that deeply buried beneath the discussion of abortion, there were unresolved attitudes toward sex.

Our findings support this hypothesis. We had measured the general underlying attitude toward sex by attitudes toward premarital sex, attitudes toward extramarital sex and attitudes toward homosexuality. We found that attitudes toward abortion correlated with these three measures independently of education, religious affiliation or frequency of church attendance. There appears to be a sexuality dimension influencing individuals' attitudes toward abortion that is not reducible to any of our control variables.

When we were looking at the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and the three measures of the general attitude toward sex holding constant our control variables, we saw numerous instances where there was a difference in the pattern of relationship between men and women. These differences were relatively small (on an average of 15 percentage points), but we felt that if they appeared for all three measures of the general attitude toward sex, they justified some explanation. Looking at the entire range of findings, we find that none of the male-female interactions were evident for all three measures. The only tendency that does seem uniform is the slight tendency for males to be more liberal than females. This tendency has been evident throughout the thesis and here, as was the case in previous instances, the tendency is slight and there are numerous exceptions.

In sum, there appears to be a sexuality dimension influencing individuals' attitudes toward abortion that works in relatively the same way for males and females. Furthermore, this sexuality dimension has an influence independent of education, religious affiliation, frequency of church attendance or sex.

Footnotes

1. In the 1972 NORC survey, we found the following similarity between Jews and agnostics in attitudes toward premarital sex:

Attitudes toward Premarital Sex

	Percent Answering		N
	always wrong	never wrong	
Protestant			
men	37%	25%	367
women	50%	11%	401
Catholic			
men	36%	23%	201
women	44%	17%	171
Jewish			
men	4%	56%	25
women	15%	46%	26
Agnostic			
men	6%	75%	45
women	19%	58%	26

2. In the 1972 NORC survey, we found the following relationship between church attendance and attitudes toward premarital sex:

Attitudes toward Premarital Sex

	Percent Answering		N
	always wrong	never wrong	
Low church attenders			
men	19%	46%	221
women	26%	31%	170
Medium church attenders			
men	26%	32%	203
women	41%	21%	164
High church attenders			
men	54%	10%	223
women	60%	6%	301

Alice Rossi, using 1965 NORC data, found that church attendance was not related to attitudes toward premarital sex. A uniformily low proportion of women approved of premarital sex relations among both high (12 percent) and low (15 percent) church attenders, and a considerably higher proportion of men had permissive views, regardless of whether they were high church attenders (26 percent) or low church attenders (34 percent) (Rossi, 1967, pp. 45-46). In our 1972 data, we find that the proportion of individuals (both males and females) who oppose premarital sex varies directly with church attendance. For men, 19 percent of the low church attenders feel premarital sex is always wrong as compared with 54 percent of the high church attenders. For women, the two percentages are 26 percent and 60 percent.

Chapter 8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Review of Problem

The objective of this thesis was to examine the attitudes of the American white adult population toward the legalization of abortion. Numerous previous studies had considered the topic and their pattern of results suggested that it was an area of rapidly changing public opinion.

Two theoretical frameworks, drawn from fertility literature, were used to explain the results. The first was the economic or utilitarian approach. This approach accounts for the different views of different groups in terms of a desire to maximize differing utilities or sets of utilities. People strive to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs and, thus, will hold favorable attitudes toward those things associated with the satisfaction of their needs and unfavorable attitudes toward those objects which thwart or punish them. The second approach was the normative approach. This view holds that a set of social norms develops in each society describing what the pattern of family growth should be (and the steps that can legitimately be taken to achieve these ends), that people learn the norms through the process of socialization, and that as they pass through the child-bearing period, most of them "adhere" to these norms.

The problem with these two approaches was the uncertainty under what conditions one of the approaches rather than the other was more suitable for the explanatory analysis of attitudes toward abortion. We overcame this problem by adopting the integration that Namboodiri and Pope (1968) had suggested. Their view was that, to the extent economic considerations of utility applied, the values involved in decisions affecting the legalization of abortion fell into a hierarchy of preferences but, to the extent that moral norms supervened, choices were made without consideration of utilities. This integration allowed us to begin analysis making predictions, and accounting for results, using the normative framework. Then, if we found that this approach was not adequately explaining the data, we could turn to the economic approach. Such a method of proceeding enabled us to retain some simplicity in hypothesis formation without entirely ruling out one of the theoretical frameworks.

Using the normative framework, we accounted for the different views of different subgroups in the population by their varying degrees of exposure and commitment to the traditional norms. Those groups with the greatest exposure were hypothesized to be most opposed to legalizing abortion and those with the least exposure, or whose experiences could have reduced the strength of the traditional norms, were hypothesized to be least opposed. Four major indicators of the traditional norms and values were used: various demographic variables, religion and religious commitment, family and marriage variables and sexuality variables.

8.2 Summary of Results

As just mentioned above, we began our analysis by making predictions, and accounting for results, using the normative framework. By and large, this framework adequately accounted for all the findings. In the few cases where it appeared not to be explaining results, we turned to economic considerations. In all these cases, however, the economic framework did not seem to be any more helpful than the normative framework. There was one instance that seemed to provide support for an integration of the normative and economic frameworks. Among a subgroup of respondents whom we would expect to be least responsive to the traditional social and religious norms, utilitarian factors seemed to better explain the pattern of attitudes toward abortion.

The complete analysis of the data can be found in Chapters 4 through 7. Rather than repeating ourselves, we shall draw selectively from each chapter. The reader is referred back to these sections for the complete discussion.

Demographic Variables

In this chapter we considered age, sex, education and size of place of current residence in relation to attitudes toward abortion. We predicted that those groups which were subject to greater exposure to the traditional norms would be less liberal toward legalizing abortion than those whose experiences had reduced the strength of these norms. By and large, our predictions were confirmed.

The variable which correlated most strongly with attitudes toward abortion was the respondent's education. We had predicted that education would be positively correlated with liberal attitudes toward abortion because education represented exposure to liberalizing influences. Our prediction was confirmed - the more education an individual had, the more liberal he or she was toward legalizing abortion. This is interesting because the economic framework would predict exactly an opposite finding. If the stand on legalizing abortion was determined entirely by economic considerations, then we would expect lower-educated people to be more favorable than higher educated people. We would expect this because lower-educated people tend to be relatively economically deprived and thus would benefit most if able to obtain abortions easily.

It was in the relationship between education and attitudes toward abortion, controlling for income and occupation, that we found some support for the utilitarian framework. Among the poorly educated, the group we would hypothesize to be most responsive to the traditional social and religious norms, there was a positive relationship between income and occupation and attitudes toward abortion. Among the college educated, though, the group least likely to be tied to the traditional norms and values, the individuals earning less than $6,000, or holding the lower status jobs, were the ones most in favor of legalizing abortion.

Religion and Religious Commitment

In the second data chapter we considered the extent to which the traditional religious norms of

American society could explain attitudes toward abortion. Our findings supported a normative explanation. For example, Catholics were least liberal toward legalizing abortion and agnostics were most liberal. This was as we had predicted considering the strong stand against birth control that the Catholic Church takes.

We found that frequency of church attendance influenced the relationship between attitudes toward abortion and education and religion in a way compatible with normative considerations. Within every educational category and for every religious affiliation, those who attended religious services frequently were more opposed to abortion than those who attended seldom or never. This seemed to us the logical extension of our normatively-derived hypotheses - differences between religious groups would be apparent only among the frequent church-attenders because it is only these individuals who have some investment in and exposure to the norms of their church.

Marriage and Family Variables

In the third data chapter we considered whether or not an individual's involvement in a marriage and family could predict his or her attitudes toward abortion. We had hypothesized that individuals who were married and had children would be more opposed to legalizing abortion than individuals who were single, because of their greater commitment and investment in the traditional norms. Our findings were largely as we had predicted them.

Support for using the normative over the economic framework came from findings in this chapter. For example, we found that as the number of children a respondent had or felt was ideal increased, the less liberal that person became toward legalizing abortion. This was as we had predicted, using the normative framework. That is, individuals, through having many children, have shown a greater commitment to the traditional norms and thus should be more opposed to legalizing abortion. The economic framework, on the other hand, does not seem able to explain these results. Individuals with many children should be more favorably disposed to legalizing abortion than individuals with few children because they are more apt to feel the need to turn to it if they or their spouse should become pregnant again.

Attitudes Toward Sex

Our purpose in the final data chapter was to see to what extent attitudes toward abortion were an extension of a general, underlying attitude toward sex. Previous studies had suggested that deeply buried beneath the discussion of abortion, there were unresolved attitudes toward abortion.

Our findings supported this hypothesis. We had measured the general underlying attitude toward sex by attitudes toward premarital sex, attitudes toward extramarital sex and attitudes toward homosexuality. We found that attitudes toward abortion correlated with these three measures independently of education, religious affiliation or frequency of church attendance. We concluded that there was a sexuality dimension influencing individuals' attitudes toward abortion that was not reducible to any of our control variables.

Our findings seem to indicate that American society is still at a stage where normative rather than economic considerations influence individual attitudes toward abortion. We suggested that economic considerations of utility would apply to decisions concerning the legalization of abortion only when moral norms were not operative. It appears that, for at least a majority of the population, moral norms are presently predominant.

8.3 Conclusions

In January 1973, the United States Supreme Court ruled that no State had the right to prohibit any woman from obtaining a legal abortion in the first six months of pregnancy. This momentous decision virtually gave every woman the right to elective abortion, at least during the first two trimesters of gestation.

Was this a decision Americans wanted? From the data analysis in this thesis, there is some question whether such a step would be approved by a majority of Americans. Certainly, as the 1960s progressed, the idea of legalized abortion won considerable acceptance with great rapidity, however there still remains rather strong public disapproval of giving women and their physicians the degree of latitude that the court has ordered.

The history of American abortion attitudes (Sauer, 1974) shows that there were strong anti-abortion norms when America was a rural, agricultural nation with high fertility values. As the country began to undergo modernization, though, there was a decline in fertility and an increase in abortion. In this century, the continuing modernization trends have reinforced low fertility values and the further use of abortion.

This changing structure of society introduces a dilemma for women. In a society where low fertility values are evolving, increasing numbers of women may find themselves involuntarily pregnant. Whereas abortion was previously considered morally and legally wrong, these women will find that their needs clash with the previously held norms. Such a society can resolve this problem in ultimately only two ways: either (1) women can be persuaded to carry unwanted pregnancies to term or (2) the society's ethical and legal code can change so that abortion becomes permissible.

In America today, it appears that the second strand is being followed. Reinforced by the Supreme Court's decision, we predict that public approval of abortion will continue to increase. Although, at present, normative considerations seem best able to account for variations in American attitudes toward abortion, it is likely that, if social conditions continue to reinforce low fertility values, the traditional ethical code will be modified and the economic framework will become more applicable to decisions concerning whether or not to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

8.4 Suggestions for Future Research

In the study of a problem, there are usually many research strands that one is unable to investigate. The limiting factors are time, energy and, particularly with secondary analysis, the nature of the data. Thus with this thesis there were numerous research suggestions that, although we wanted to pick up and follow, we were unable to. Rather than ignore them completely, we shall mention some of them now as ideas for future research.

One topic that deserves to be considered is the important role that education seems to play in the rate at which people accept social and cultural innovations. It is probably well-known that some educational classes are more willing to accept changes than others, but it would be interesting to consider the implications of this differential change for the development of status conflict over moral issues.

Another finding that deserved more attention was the lack of a relationship between the working status of the woman and her attitudes toward abortion, when there was a relationship between attitudes toward a woman working and attitudes toward abortion. It would be interesting to determine why women work and whether this could account for the lack of a relationship between attitudes and working status.

The major suggestion for future research would have to be the consideration of all our independent variables simultaneously. By using tabular analysis, we were unable to consider the total impact of the demographic variables, the religious variables, the family variables and the sexuality variables on attitudes toward abortion. Possibly by using alternative statistical techniques, some researcher in the future will be able to tell, not only the impact each of these variables has on attitudes toward abortion, but also their combined impact.

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APPENDIX

Throughout the thesis, we have had occasion to refer to tables that, although important in their own right, we felt were unimportant to the discussion at hand. We decided to include these tables in an Appendix so that the reader could refer to them and come to his own conclusions.

Table A1 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by marital status and religion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	married	never married	widowed	married	never married	widow
Conditions						
Economic problems						
Protestant	49	55	32	55	68	37
Catholic	36	39	29	36	51	32
Jewish	74	8/9	3/4	90	5/5	6/6
Agnostic	79	9/12	2/2	85	86	3/4
Unmarried						
Protestant	40	60	31	51	62	39
Catholic	32	29	29	32	44	32
Jewish	77	9/9	3/4	93	5/5	4/6
Agnostic	69	8/12	2/2	79	82	3/4
Family control						
Protestant	38	52	26	49	59	27
Catholic	26	39	33	29	43	32
Jewish	69	7/9	3/4	90	5/5	5/6
Agnostic	71	9/12	2/2	81	79	2/4
N						
Protestant	592	84	84	610	68	62
Catholic	312	44	21	255	61	31
Jewish	39	9	4	29	5	6
Agnostic	42	12	2	47	28	4

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A2 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by marital status and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	married	never married	widowed	married	never married	widow
Conditions						
Economic problems						
low attendance	62	72	50	66	75	51
medium attend.	50	49	37	62	69	63
high attendance	35	44	26	33	41	26
Unmarried						
low attendance	57	73	57	61	70	42
medium attend.	39	53	30	57	60	59
high attendance	30	38	22	31	39	28
Family control						
low attendance	53	70	43	65	68	30
medium attend.	40	53	33	54	60	56
high attendance	24	35	22	26	33	26
N						
low attendance	287	64	28	311	80	33
medium attend.	292	47	27	279	48	27
high attendance	414	55	58	365	39	43

Table A3 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by respondent's number of children and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	Number of children			Number of children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	84	78	70	89	91	89
high school	91	89	81	91	93	83
some college	90	87	13/15	97	94	14/16
college grad.	95	86	3/6	95	98	5/5
Defect in fetus						
grade school	73	73	61	76	77	77
high school	82	71	72	87	91	78
some college	85	84	12/15	92	88	13/16
college grad.	92	84	3/6	92	83	4/5
Rape						
grade school	71	67	56	72	76	67
high school	83	79	74	85	88	78
some college	85	89	11/15	96	84	11/16
college grad.	95	86	3/6	93	91	5/5
Economic problems						
grade school	37	28	23	45	40	34
high school	52	49	44	53	54	36
some college	64	51	7/15	65	61	6/16
college grad.	76	59	2/6	84	59	2/5
Unmarried						
grade school	33	24	23	40	40	25
high school	48	41	37	50	46	39
some college	55	42	9/15	63	61	4/16
college grad.	72	52	2/6	80	63	1/5
Family control						
grade school	31	23	21	40	30	23
high school	43	36	30	49	47	31
some college	50	40	7/15	60	55	5/16
college grad.	69	52	2/6	77	56	1/5
N						
grade school	241	165	92	244	126	73
high school	261	126	43	280	123	36
some college	162	55	15	164	51	16
college grad.	131	44	6	127	54	5

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A4 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by respondent's number of children and religion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	Number of Children			Number of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
Protestant	89	88	81	93	95	90
Catholic	86	73	64	89	88	83
Jewish	97	13/14	-	100	9/9	-
Agnostic	96	12/13	3/5	98	17/18	3/3
Defect in fetus						
Protestant	84	81	72	86	88	84
Catholic	72	61	55	80	73	70
Jewish	90	13/14	-	100	9/9	-
Agnostic	93	12/13	3/5	97	16/18	1/3
Rape						
Protestant	83	79	66	86	85	75
Catholic	75	69	55	78	75	67
Jewish	98	13/14	-	97	9/9	-
Agnostic	91	10/13	4/5	95	18/18	1/3
Economic problems						
Protestant	52	45	34	58	54	40
Catholic	42	30	22	43	36	24
Jewish	78	10/14	-	97	7/9	-
Agnostic	87	7/13	3/5	88	13/18	2/3
Unmarried						
Protestant	47	36	34	55	52	32
Catholic	36	28	22	39	32	22
Jewish	83	10/14	-	91	8/9	-
Agnostic	82	7/13	2/5	83	14/18	1/3
Family control						
Protestant	43	34	27	53	47	27
Catholic	32	24	22	38	28	22
Jewish	75	8/14	-	91	8/9	-
Agnostic	82	9/13	2/5	83	11/18	2/3
N						
Protestant	464	244	90	481	218	80
Catholic	215	116	58	221	101	46
Jewish	40	14	0	32	9	0
Agnostic	55	13	5	65	18	3

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A5 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by respondent's number of children and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	Number of Children			Number of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
low attendance	98	93	87	96	96	98
medium attend.	91	89	81	96	97	88
high attendance	81	74	61	84	89	75
Defect in fetus						
low attendance	92	87	77	89	90	83
medium attend.	81	82	69	90	93	88
high attendance	74	64	56	77	75	66
Rape						
low attendance	92	84	79	89	94	81
medium attend.	84	80	72	90	88	76
high attendance	73	68	47	74	73	58
Economic problems						
low attendance	71	49	47	70	70	43
medium attend.	54	49	19	67	56	48
high attendance	39	33	26	35	35	21
Unmarried						
low attendance	69	48	47	66	63	34
medium attend.	48	31	22	61	55	48
high attendance	32	29	24	33	35	13
Family control						
low attendance	64	45	36	69	62	34
medium attend.	47	33	28	59	49	32
high attendance	27	25	19	28	28	15
N						
low attendance	251	108	47	306	104	53
medium attend.	244	105	36	251	94	25
high attendance	295	174	72	254	155	53

Table A6 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by ideal number of children and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Ideal No. of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions			
Mother's health			
grade school	85	77	80
high school	93	89	81
some college	93	86	6/9
college grad.	99	81	8/11
Defect in fetus			
grade school	80	71	61
high school	87	73	61
some college	87	81	6/9
college grad.	96	81	6/11
Rape			
grade school	77	64	57
high school	86	80	65
some college	87	82	7/9
college grad.	97	83	10/11
Economic problems			
grade school	40	30	21
high school	57	48	35
some college	69	49	4/9
college grad.	84	49	3/11
Unmarried			
grade school	39	24	19
high school	55	37	33
some college	61	42	4/9
college grad.	80	40	5/11
Family control			
grade school	38	22	19
high school	50	32	30
some college	54	41	2/9
college grad.	78	41	3/11
N			
grade school	173	235	70
high school	199	178	43
some college	118	102	9
college grad.	115	47	11

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A7 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by ideal number of children and religion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Ideal No. of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions			
Mother's health			
Protestant	89	87	83
Catholic	95	74	72
Jewish	100	18/19	4/5
Agnostic	89	92	6/6
Defect in fetus			
Protestant	83	79	62
Catholic	89	64	55
Jewish	100	16/19	4/5
Agnostic	87	92	5/6
Rape			
Protestant	86	76	61
Catholic	82	69	64
Jewish	100	17/19	5/5
Agnostic	87	87	4/6
Economic problems			
Protestant	64	42	22
Catholic	52	31	29
Jewish	73	12/19	2/5
Agnostic	84	71	4/6
Unmarried			
Protestant	59	32	23
Catholic	55	28	26
Jewish	75	11/19	3/5
Agnostic	84	62	3/6
Family control			
Protestant	58	30	16
Catholic	46	24	24
Jewish	71	11/19	1/5
Agnostic	83	62	5/6
N			
Protestant	386	328	64
Catholic	136	181	58
Jewish	29	19	5
Agnostic	38	24	6

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A8 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by ideal number of children and church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Ideal No. of Children		
	0,1,2	3,4	5+
Conditions			
Mother's health			
low attendance	94	91	89
medium attendance	89	90	89
high attendance	87	75	67
Defect in fetus			
low attendance	89	86	75
medium attendance	86	75	81
high attendance	80	68	41
Rape			
low attendance	92	84	75
medium attendance	79	75	86
high attendance	83	68	44
Economic problems			
low attendance	74	53	42
medium attendance	58	44	36
high attendance	53	32	15
Unmarried			
low attendance	73	46	39
medium attendance	54	32	36
high attendance	54	26	15
Family control			
low attendance	71	41	42
medium attendance	48	34	25
high attendance	47	22	10
N			
low attendance	220	140	36
medium attendance	184	158	36
high attendance	195	264	61

Table A9 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by number of siblings and education. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	No. of Siblings			No. of Siblings		
	0,1,2	3,4,5	6+	0,1,2	3,4,5	6+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
grade school	80	84	75	90	90	89
high school	88	90	90	93	93	87
some college	90	88	86	95	97	97
college grad.	92	87	16/16	97	96	18/19
Defect in fetus						
grade school	78	75	65	73	81	76
high school	81	75	77	90	87	83
some college	90	83	73	89	91	97
college grad.	90	81	16/16	91	86	17/19
Rape						
grade school	69	73	61	76	77	69
high school	82	81	79	89	86	79
some college	87	85	82	91	92	87
college grad.	92	89	16/16	93	96	15/19
Economic problems						
grade school	38	29	29	50	47	36
high school	58	44	43	58	49	45
some college	60	65	50	64	58	60
college grad.	75	64	10/16	80	68	13/19
Unmarried						
grade school	34	26	26	40	44	32
high school	52	39	39	53	49	37
some college	55	50	50	61	55	63
college grad.	69	66	6/16	77	70	12/19
Family control						
grade school	32	23	25	41	39	29
high school	45	36	35	54	47	37
some college	49	49	43	61	54	50
college grad.	68	60	7/16	73	62	13/19
N						
grade school	117	161	224	78	154	210
high school	188	157	83	175	152	112
some college	115	72	44	137	67	30
college grad.	111	53	16	117	50	19

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A10 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by number of siblings and religion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 and 1973 NORC surveys.

	1972			1973		
	No. of Siblings			No. of Siblings		
	0,1,2	3,4,5	6+	0,1,2	3,4,5	6+
Conditions						
Mother's health						
Protestant	90	89	83	94	93	91
Catholic	79	80	76	89	90	86
Jewish	97	12/13	5/5	100	13/13	4/4
Agnostic	95	95	10/12	100	96	14/15
Defect in fetus						
Protestant	87	83	74	89	88	83
Catholic	74	63	61	78	78	76
Jewish	94	11/13	4/5	100	13/13	4/4
Agnostic	92	91	10/12	98	87	13/15
Rape						
Protestant	85	81	70	90	87	75
Catholic	71	74	66	79	78	70
Jewish	94	13/13	5/5	96	13/13	4/4
Agnostic	90	86	10/12	100	83	14/15
Economic problems						
Protestant	59	44	37	67	54	41
Catholic	42	35	29	40	38	37
Jewish	78	10/13	3/5	92	12/13	4/4
Agnostic	85	73	9/12	92	70	12/15
Unmarried						
Protestant	53	39	30	61	53	39
Catholic	34	31	29	38	37	28
Jewish	78	10/13	5/5	83	13/13	4/4
Agnostic	80	68	8/12	87	65	12/15
Family control						
Protestant	49	34	30	60	48	35
Catholic	29	29	27	37	33	29
Jewish	69	10/13	3/5	83	13/13	4/4
Agnostic	82	73	8/12	87	65	10/15
N						
Protestant	307	267	225	294	252	236
Catholic	136	133	119	136	126	105
Jewish	36	13	5	24	13	4
Agnostic	39	22	12	48	23	15

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A11 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward a married woman working and religion. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Married Woman Working?	
	approve	disapprove
Conditions		
Mother's health		
Protestant	91	82
Catholic	81	77
Jewish	100	9/11
Agnostic	96	11/14
Defect in fetus		
Protestant	86	74
Catholic	68	65
Jewish	95	8/11
Agnostic	95	10/14
Rape		
Protestant	85	71
Catholic	72	68
Jewish	98	10/11
Agnostic	89	11/14
Economic problems		
Protestant	55	36
Catholic	40	28
Jewish	86	5/11
Agnostic	82	8/14
Unmarried		
Protestant	48	32
Catholic	35	26
Jewish	83	7/11
Agnostic	79	7/14
Family control		
Protestant	45	28
Catholic	32	23
Jewish	79	5/11
Agnostic	80	8/14
N		
Protestant	495	286
Catholic	233	155
Jewish	42	11
Agnostic	56	14

Where N is less than 20, the fraction rather than the percent of those who approve of legalizing abortion is given.

Table A12 Attitudes of white Americans toward abortion by attitudes toward a married woman working and frequency of church attendance. Percent who approve of legalizing abortion under conditions specified. Data from 1972 NORC survey.

	Married Woman Working?	
	approve	disapprove
Conditions		
Mother's health		
low attendance	97	92
medium attend.	91	85
high attendance	80	70
Defect in fetus		
low attendance	90	86
medium attend.	84	72
high attendance	72	62
Rape		
low attendance	90	84
medium attend.	84	74
high attendance	73	61
Economic problems		
low attendance	68	50
medium attend.	56	35
high attendance	42	25
Unmarried		
low attendance	67	49
medium attend.	47	27
high attendance	34	24
Family control		
low attendance	62	42
medium attend.	47	29
high attendance	30	18
N		
low attendance	263	139
medium attend.	257	120
high attendance	319	212